THE

ROMAN HISTORY

FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE

CITY OF ROME,

TO THE DESTRUCTION OF THE

WESTERN EMPIRE.

By Dr. GOLDSMITH.

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CHAP. XXXI.

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

EMPIRE OF ROME.

JULIUS CÆSAR, FIRST EMPEROR.

CÆSAR has been much celebrated for his fortune, yet his abilities appear equal to his higheſt ſucceſs. He poſſeſſed many ſhining qualities, but theſe were debaſed by a boundleſs ambition. His talents were ſuch as would have rendered him victorious at the head of any army he commanded, and he would have governed in any republic that had given him birth. Having now gained a complete victory, his ſucceſs only ſeemed to increaſe his activity, and inſpire him with freſh reſolution to face new dangers. He reſolved therefore to purſue his U. C. 706.

laſt advantage, and follow Pompey to whatever country he ſhould retire; convinced that, during his life, he might gain new triumphs, but could never enjoy ſecurity. Hearing that Pompey was at Amphipolis, he ſent off his troops before him, and then embarked on board a light veſſel, in order to croſs the Helleſpont. In the middle of the ſtrait, he fell in with one of Pompey's commanders, at the head of ten ſhips of war: Cæſar, no way terrified at the ſuperiority of his force, bore up to him, and commanded him to ſubmit. The other inſtantly obeyed, awed by the terrour of Cæſar's name, and ſurrendered himſelf and his fleet at diſcretion.

From thence he continued his voyage to Epheſus, and then to Rhodes; and, being informed that Pompey had already been there, he made no doubt but that he was fled to Egypt; wherefore, loſing no time, he ſet ſail for that kingdom, and arrived at Alexandria with about four thouſand men; a very inconſiderable force to keep ſuch a powerful kingdom under ſubjection. But he was now grown ſo ſecure in his good fortune, that he expected to find obedience wherever he found men. Upon his landing, the firſt accounts he received were of Pompey's miſerable end: and ſoon after, one of the murderers came with his head and ring, as a moſt grateful preſent to the conqueror.

Cæſar

Cæſar had too much humanity to be pleaſed with ſuch an horrid ſpectacle: he turned away from it with diſguſt; and, after a ſhort pauſe, gave vent to his piety in a flood of tears. He ſhortly after ordered a magnificent tomb to be built to his memory, on the ſpot where he was murdered; and a temple near the place to Nemeſis, who was the goddeſs that puniſhed thoſe who were cruel to men in adverſity.

It ſhould ſeem that the Egyptians by this time had ſome hopes of breaking off all alliance with the Romans, which they conſidered, as in fact it was, but a ſpecious ſubjection. They firſt began to take offence at Cæſar's carrying the enſigns of Roman power before him as he entered the city. Photinus, the eunuch, alſo treated him with great diſreſpect, and even attempted his life. Cæſar, who knew how to diſſemble, concealed his reſentment till he had a force ſufficient to puniſh his treachery; and ſending privately for the legions which had been formerly enrolled for Pompey's ſervice, as being the neareſt to Egypt, he, in the mean time, pretended to repoſe an entire confidence in the king's miniſter, making great entertainments, and aſſiſting at the conferences of the philoſophers who were in great numbers at Alexandria. However, he ſoon changed his manner when he found himſelf in no danger from the attempts of Photinus, and

declared that, as being a Roman conſul, it was his duty to ſettle the ſucceſſion of the Egyptian throne.

There were at that time two pretenders to the crown of Egypt; Ptolemy, the acknowledged king; and the celebrated Cleopatra, his ſiſter; to whom by the cuſtom of the country, he alſo was married; and who, by his father's will, ſhared jointly in the ſucceſſion. However, not being contented with a bare participation of power, Cleopatra aimed at governing alone; but being oppoſed in her views by the Roman ſenate, who confirmed her brother's title to the crown, ſhe was baniſhed into Syria, with Arſinoë, her younger ſiſter. Cæſar gave her new hopes of acquiring the government, and cited both her and her brother to plead their cauſe before him. Photinus, the young king's guardian, who had long borne the moſt inveterate hatred, as well to Cæſar as Cleopatra, rejected his propoſal, and ſent an army of twenty thouſand men to beſiege Alexandria, which was in the poſſeſſion of the Romans. Cæſar bravely repulſed the enemy for ſome time; but finding the city of too great extent to be defended by ſo ſmall an army as he then commanded, he retired to the palace, which commanded the harbour, where he purpoſed to make his ſtand. Achilles, who commanded the Egyptians, attacked him there with great vigour, and endeavoured

voured to make himſelf maſter of the fleet that lay before the palace. Cæſar, however, too well knew the importance of thoſe ſhips in the hands of an enemy; and therefore burnt them all, in ſpite of every effort to prevent him. He next poſſeſſed himſelf of the iſle of Pharos, the key to the Alexandrian port; by which means he was enabled to receive the ſupplies which were ſent him; and, in this ſituation, he determined to withſtand the united force of the Egyptians.

In the mean time Cleopatra, having heard of the preſent turn in her favour, reſolved to depend rather on Cæſar's favour for gaining the government, than her own forces. She had, indeed, aſſembled an army in Syria to ſupport her claims; but now judged it the wiſeſt way to rely entirely on the deciſion of her ſelf-elected judge. But no arts, as ſhe juſtly conceived, were ſo likely to influence Cæſar as the charms of her perſon, which, though not faultleſs, was extremely ſeducing. She was now in the bloom of youth, and every feature borrowed grace from the lively turn of her temper: to the moſt engaging addreſs ſhe joined the moſt harmonious voice, which the hiſtorians of her time compare to the beſt tuned inſtrument. With all theſe accompliſhments ſhe poſſeſſed a great ſhare of the learning of the times, and could give audience to the ambaſſadors of ſeven different nations without an

interpreter. The difficulty was how to gain admittance to Cæſar, as her enemies were in poſſeſſion of all the avenues that led to the palace. For this purpoſe ſhe went on board a ſmall veſſel, and, in the evening, landed near the palace, where, being wrapt up in a coverlet, ſhe was carried by one Aſpolodorus into his very chamber. Her addreſs, at firſt, pleaſed him; her wit and underſtanding ſtill fanned the flame; but her careſſes, which were carried beyond the bounds of innocence, entirely brought him over to ſecond her claims.

While Cleopatra was thus employed in forwarding her own views, her ſiſter Arſinoe was alſo ſtrenuouſly engaged in the camp, in purſuing a ſeparate intereſt. She had found means, by the aſſiſtance of one Ganymede, her confident, to make a large diviſion in the Egyptian army in her favour; and ſoon after, by one of thoſe ſudden revolutions which are common in Barbarian camps to this day, ſhe cauſed Achilles to be murdered, and Ganymede to take the command in his ſtead, and to carry on the ſiege with greater vigour than before. Ganymede's principal effort was by letting in the ſea upon thoſe canals which ſupplied the palace with freſh water; but this inconvenience Cæſar remedied by digging a great number of wells. His next endeavour was, to prevent the junction of Cæſar's twenty-fourth legion, which he twice attempted

tempted in vain. He ſoon after made himſelf maſter of a bridge which joined the iſle of Pharos to the continent, from which poſt Cæſar was reſolved to diſlodge him. In the heat of the action ſome mariners, partly through curioſity, and partly ambition, came and joined the combatants; but, being ſeiſed with a panick, inſtantly fled, and ſpread a general terrour through the army. All Cæſar's endeavours to rally his forces were in vain, the confuſion was paſt remedy, and numbers were drowned or put to the ſword in attempting to eſcape. Now, therefore, ſeeing the irremediable diſorder of his troops, he retired to a ſhip, in order to get to the palace that was juſt oppoſite: however, he was no ſooner on board than great numbers entered at the ſame time with him; upon which, apprehenſive of the ſhip's ſinking he jumped into the ſea, and ſwam two hundred paces to the fleet that lay before the palace, all the time holding his own Commentaries in his left hand above water, and his coat of mail with his teeth.

The Egyptians, finding their efforts to take the palace ineffectual, endeavoured, at leaſt, to get their king out of Cæſar's power, as he had ſeiſed upon his perſon in the beginning of their diſputes. For this purpoſe they made uſe of their cuſtomary arts of diſſimulation, profeſſing the ſincereſt deſire of peace, and

only wanting the preſence of their lawful prince to give a ſanction to the treaty. Cæſar, who was aware of their perfidy, nevertheleſs concealed his ſuſpicions, and ſuffered Ptolemy to join them, as he was under no apprehenſions from the abilities of a boy. Ptolemy, however, the inſtant he was ſet at liberty, inſtead of entering into a treaty, made every effort to give vigour to his hoſtilities.

In this manner Cæſar was hemmed in for ſome time by this artful and inſidious enemy, with all manner of difficulties againſt him; but was at laſt relieved from this mortifying ſituation by Mithridates Pergamenus, one of his moſt faithful partizans, who came with an army to his aſſiſtance. This general, collecting a numerous body of forces in Syria, marched into Egypt, took Peluſium, repulſed the Egyptian army with loſs, and at laſt, joining with Cæſar, attacked their camp with a great ſlaughter of the Egyptians; Ptolemy himſelf, attempting to eſcape on board a veſſel that was ſailing down the river, was drowned by the ſhip's ſinking, and Cæſar thus became maſter of all Egypt without further oppoſition. He then appointed Cleopatra, with her younger brother, an infant, joint governors, according to the intent of their father's will, and drove Arſinoë with Ganymede into baniſhment.

Having

Having thus diſpoſed of kingdoms, he now for awhile, ſeemed to relax from his uſual activity of conduct, captivated with the charms of Cleopatra. Inſtead of quitting Egypt to go and quell the remains of Pompey's party, he abandoned himſelf to his pleaſures, paſſing whole nights in feaſts, and all the exceſſes of high-wrought luxury, with the young queen. He even reſolved to attend her up the Nile into Ethiopia; but the brave veterans who had long followed his fortune, boldly reprehended his conduct, and refuſed to be partners in ſo infamous an expedition. Thus, at length, rouzed from his lethargy, he reſolved to prefer the call of ambition to that of love; and to leave Cleopatra, by whom he had a ſon, afterwards named Cæſario, in order to oppoſe Pharnaces, king of Boſphorus, who had made ſome inroads upon the dominions of Rome, in the Eaſt.

This prince, who was the ſon of the great Mithridates, being ambitious of recovering his father's dominions, ſeiſed upon Armenia and Colchis, and overcame Domitius, who had been ſent againſt him. Upon Cæſar's march to oppoſe him, Pharnaces, who was as much terrified at the name of the general as at the ſtrength of his army, laboured, by all the arts of negociation, to avert the impending danger. Cæſar, exaſperated at his crimes and his ingratitude,

at

at firſt diſſembled with the ambaſſadors, and, uſing all expedition, fell upon the enemy unexpectedly, and, in a few hours, obtained a ſpeedy and complete victory. Pharnaces, attempting to take refuge in his capital, was ſlain by one of his own commanders—A juſt puniſhment for his former parricide. This victory was gained with ſo much eaſe, that Cæſar could not avoid obſerving, That Pompey was very happy in gaining ſo much glory againſt this enemy at ſo eaſy a rate. In writing to a friend at Rome, he expreſſed the rapidity of his victory in three words, *veni, vidi, vici*; a man ſo accuſtomed to conqueſt, thought a ſlight battle ſcarce worth a longer letter.

Cæſar having ſettled affairs in this part of the empire, as well as time would permit; having beſtowed the government of Armenia upon Ariobarzanes, that of Judea upon Hyrcanus and Antipater, and that of Boſphorus upon Mithridates, embarked for Italy, where he arrived ſooner than his enemies could expect, but not before his affairs there abſolutely required his preſence. He had been, during his abſence, created conſul for five years, dictator for one year, and tribune of the people for life. But Anthony, who in the mean time governed in Rome for him, had filled the city with riot and debauchery, and many commotions enſued, which nothing but the arrival of Cæſar ſo opportunely

portunely could appeaſe. However, by his moderation and humanity, he ſoon reſtored tranquillity to the city, ſcarce making any diſtinction between thoſe of his own and the oppoſite party. Thus having by gentle means reſtored his authority at home, he prepared to march into Africa, where Pompey's party had found time to rally, under Scipio and Cato, aſſiſted by Juba, king of Mauritania. But the vigour of his proceedings had like to have been retarded by a mutiny in his own army. Thoſe veteran legions, who had hitherto conquered all that came before them, began to murmur, for not having received the rewards which they had expected for their paſt ſervices, and now inſiſted upon their diſcharge. The ſedition broke out in the tenth legion, which till then had ſignalized themſelves by their valour and attachment to their general. Cæſar, at firſt, endeavoured to ſoothe them by promiſes of future rewards; but theſe, inſtead of appeaſing the ſedition, only ſerved to increaſe it. The whole army marched from Campania towards Rome, pillaging and plundering all the country in their route. Cæſar immediately cauſed the gates of the city to be ſhut, and ordered ſuch troops as were in readineſs to defend the walls: he then boldly went out alone to meet the mutineers, notwithſtanding the repreſentations of his friends who were apprehenſive for his ſafety. Upon coming

coming into the Campus Martius, where the moſt tumultuous were aſſembled, he boldly mounted the tribunal: and, with a ſtern air, demanded of the ſoldiers what they wanted, or who had conducted them there? A conduct ſo reſolute ſeemed to diſconcert the whole band: they began by complaining, that, being worn out with fatigue, and exhauſted by their numberleſs wounds, they were in hopes to obtain a diſcharge. "Then take your diſcharge (cried "Cæſar) and when I ſhall have gained new "conqueſts with other troops, I promiſe that "you ſhall be partakers in the ſpoil." So much generoſity quite confounded the ſeditious, who were agitated between the contending paſſions of gratitude and jealouſy; they were grateful for his intended bounty, and jealous leſt any other army ſhould ſhare the honours of completing the conqueſt of the world. They unanimouſly entreated his pardon, and even offered to be decimated to obtain it. Cæſar for awhile ſeemed to continue inflexible, and at laſt granted as a favour what it was his intereſt earneſtly to deſire; but the tenth legion never recovered his former favour.

Cæſar, according to his uſual diligence, landed with a ſmall party in Africa, to face Scipio, leaving orders for the reſt of his army to follow him. After many movements, and ſeveral ſkirmiſhes

miſhes between the two armies, which only ſerved to deſtroy mankind without determining the quarrel, he reſolved at laſt to come to a deciſive action. For this purpoſe he inveſted the city of Tapſus, ſuppoſing that Scipio would attempt its relief, which turned out according to his expectations. Scipio, joining with the young king of Mauritania, advanced with his army, and encamping near Cæſar, they ſoon came to a general battle. Cæſar's ſucceſs was as uſual; the enemy received a complete and final overthrow, with little or no loſs on his ſide. Juba and Petreius his general killed each other in deſpair; Scipio, attempting to eſcape by ſea into Spain, fell in among the enemy, and was ſlain; ſo that, of all the generals of that unfortunate party, Cato was the only one who remained.

This extraordinary man, whom no proſperity could elate, nor no misfortunes depreſs, having retired into Africa after the battle of Pharſalia, had led the wretched remains of that defeat through burning deſerts and tracts infeſted with ſerpents of various malignity, and was now in the city of Utica, which he had been left to defend. Still, however, in love with even the appearance of the Roman government, he had formed the principal citizens into a ſenate, and conceived a reſolution of holding out the town. He accordingly aſſembled his ſenators upon this occaſion, and demanded their advice

upon

upon what meaſures were beſt to be taken, and whether they ſhould defend this laſt city that owned the cauſe of freedom. "If (ſaid he) "you are willing to ſubmit to Cæſar, I muſt "acquieſce; but, if you are willing to hazard "the dangers of defending the laſt remains "of liberty, let me be your guide and com-"panion in ſo great an enterprize. Rome has "often recovered from greater calamities than "theſe, and there are many motives to en-"courage our attempt. Spain has declared "in our cauſe, and Rome itſelf bears the yoke "with indignation. With reſpect to the ha-"zards we muſt encounter, why ſhould they "terrify us? Obſerve our enemy: he braves "every danger, and encounters every fatigue, "to undo mankind, and make his country "wretched; and ſhall we ſcruple to ſuffer a "ſhort interval of pain, in a cauſe ſo glori-"ous?" This ſpeech had at firſt a ſurpriſing effect; but the enthuſiaſm for liberty ſoon ſubſiding, he was reſolved no longer to force men to be free, who ſeemed naturally prone to ſlavery. He now, therefore, deſired ſome of his friends to ſave themſelves by ſea, and adviſed others to rely upon Cæſar's clemency; obſerving, that, as to himſelf, he was at laſt victorious. After this, ſupping chearfully among his friends, he retired to his apartment, where he behaved with unuſual tenderneſs to his ſon,

and to all his friends. When he came into his bed-chamber, he laid himſelf down, and took up Plato's Dialogue on the Immortality of the Soul; and, having read for ſome time, happening to caſt his eyes to the head of his bed, he was much ſurpriſed not to find his ſword there, which had been taken away by his ſon's order, while they were at ſupper. Upon this, calling one of his domeſticks to know what was become of it, and receiving no anſwer, he reſumed his ſtudies; but ſome time after called for his ſword again. When he had done reading, and perceiving nobody obeyed him, he called all his domeſticks one after the other, and, with a peremptory air, demanded his ſword once more. His ſon came in ſoon after, and with tears beſought him, in the moſt humble manner, to change his reſolution; but, receiving a ſtern reprimand, he deſiſted from his perſuaſions. His ſword being at length brought him, he ſeemed ſatisfied, and cried out, "Now again am I "maſter of myſelf." He then took up the book again, which he read twice over, and fell into a ſound ſleep. Upon waking, he called to one of his freed-men, to know if his friends were embarked, or if any thing yet remained that could be done to ſerve them. The freed-man aſſuring him that all was quiet, he was then ordered again to leave the room; and Cato was no ſooner alone than he ſtabbed himſelf through the breaſt, but not

with

with that force he intended, for the wound not diſpatching him, he fell upon his bed, and at the ſame time overturned a table on which he had been drawing ſome geometrical figures. At the noiſe he made in his fall, his ſervants gave a ſhriek, and his ſon and friends immediately entered the room. They found him weltering in his blood, and his bowels puſhed out through the wound. The phyſician, who attended his family, perceiving that his inteſtines were yet untouched, was for replacing them; but when Cato had recovered his ſenſes, and underſtood their intention to preſerve his life, he puſhed the phyſician from him, and with a fierce reſolution tore out his bowels and expired.

In this manner Cato died, who was one of the moſt faultleſs characters we find in the Roman hiſtory. He was ſevere, but not cruel; and ready to pardon much greater faults in others than he could forgive in himſelf. His haughtineſs and auſterity ſeemed rather the effect of principle than natural conſtitution, for no man was more humane to his dependents, or better loved by thoſe about him. The conſtancy of his oppoſition to Cæſar proceeded from a thorough conviction of the injuſtice of his purſuits: and the laſt act of his life was but conformable to the tenets of his ſect; as the Stoics maintained, that life was a gift which all men might return to the donor when the preſent was no longer pleaſing.

Cæſar

Cæſar, upon hearing of Cato's death could not help obſerving, That as Cato had envied him the glory of ſaving his life, ſo he had reaſon to envy him the glory of dying ſo bravely. This event terminating the war in Africa, Cæſar returned in triumph to Rome; and, as if he had abridged all his former triumphs only to increaſe the ſplendour of this, the citizens were aſtoniſhed at the magnificence of the proceſſion, and the number of the countries he had ſubdued. It laſted four days: the firſt was for Gaul, the ſecond for Egypt, the third for his victories in Aſia, and the fourth for that over Juba in Africa. His veterans, covered with ſcars, attended their triumphant general, crowned with laurels, to the capitol. To every one of theſe he gave a ſum equivalent to about an hundred and fifty pounds of our money, double that ſum to the centurions, and four times as much to the ſuperior officers. The citizens alſo ſhared his bounty; to every one of whom he diſtributed ten buſhels of corn, ten pounds of oil, and a ſum of money of the value of about two pounds ſterling. After this, he entertained the people at above twenty thouſand tables, and exhibited the combat of gladiators, which filled Rome with a concourſe of ſpectators from every part of Italy.

The people, intoxicated with the allurements of pleaſure, thought their freedom too ſmall a

return for ſuch benefits: they ſeemed eager only to find out new modes of homage, and unuſual epithets of adulation for their great enſlaver. He was created by a new title *Magiſter Morum*, or maſter of the morals of the people; he received the title of Emperor, Father of his Country; his perſon was declared ſacred; and, in ſhort, upon him alone were devolved for life all the great dignities of the ſtate. It muſt be owned, however, that ſo much power could never have been entruſted in better hands. He immediately began his reign by repreſſing vice and encouraging virtue. He committed the power of judicature to the ſenators and the knights alone, and by many ſumptuary laws reſtrained the ſcandalous luxuries of the rich. He propoſed rewards to all ſuch as had many children, and took the moſt prudent methods of re-peopling the city, which had been exhauſted in the late commotions.

Having thus reſtored proſperity once more to Rome, he again found himſelf under a neceſſity of going into Spain to oppoſe an army which had been raiſed there under the two ſons of Pompey, and Labienus his former general. He proceeded in this expedition with his uſual celerity, and arrived in Spain before the enemy thought him yet departed from Rome. Cneius and Sextus, Pompey's ſons, profiting by their unhappy father's example, reſolved as much as poſſible

poſſible to protract the war; ſo that the firſt operations of the two armies were ſpent in ſieges and fruitleſs attempts to ſurpriſe each other. At length Cæſar, after taking many cities from the enemy, and purſuing Pompey with unwearied perſeverance, at laſt compelled him to come to a battle upon the plains of Munda. Pompey drew up his men by break of day, upon the declivity of an hill, with great exactneſs and order. Cæſar drew up his men likewiſe in the plain below, and, after advancing a little way from his trenches, ordered them to make an halt, expecting the enemy to come down from the hill. This delay made Cæſar's ſoldiers begin to murmur, while Pompey's with full vigour poured down upon them, and a dreadful conflict enſued. Hitherto Cæſar had fought for glory, but here he fought for life. His ſoldiers behaved with intrepidity, incited by the hopes of making this a final period to their labour. Pompey's men were not leſs ſtrenuous, expecting no pardon, as having their lives formerly given them when overthrown in Africa. The firſt ſhock was ſo dreadful, that Cæſar's troops, who had hitherto been uſed to conquer, began to waver. Cæſar was never in ſo much danger as now: he threw himſelf ſeveral times into the very throng of battle. "What, (cried he) are you going to give up "your general, who is grown grey in fighting

" at your head, to a parcel of boys?" Upon this his tenth legion, willing to recover their general's loſt eſteem, exerted themſelves with more than former bravery; and a party of horſe being detached by Labienus from the camp in purſuit of a body of Numidian cavalry, Cæſar cried aloud, That they were flying. This cry inſtantly ſpread itſelf through both armies, exciting the one as much as it depreſſed the other. Now, therefore, the tenth legion preſſed forward, and a total rout ſoon enſued. Thirty thouſand men were killed on Pompey's ſide, and amongſt them was Labienus, whom Cæſar ordered to be buried with the funeral honours of a general officer. Cneius Pompey eſcaped with a few horſemen to the ſea-ſide, but finding his paſſage intercepted by Cæſar's lieutenant, he was obliged to ſeek for a retreat in an obſcure cavern. There, wounded and deſtitute of all kinds of ſuccour, he patiently awaited the approach of the enemy. He was quickly diſcovered by ſome of Cæſar's troops, who preſently cut off his head and brought it to the conqueror. His brother Sextus, however, concealed himſelf ſo well that he eſcaped all purſuit; ſo that Cæſar was obliged to return without him, after having ſeverely fined the cities of Spain for their late imputed rebellion.

Cæſar by this laſt blow ſubdued all his avowed enemies, and had now conquered the beſt

beſt part of the world in almoſt as ſhort a time as others could travel through the ſame extent of country. He therefore returned to Rome, for the laſt time, to receive new dignities and honours, and to enjoy in his own perſon an accumulation of all the great offices of the ſtate. Still, however, he pretended to a moderation in the enjoyment of his power: he left the conſuls to be named by the people; but, as he poſſeſſed all the authority of the office, it from that time began to ſink into contempt. He enlarged the number of ſenators alſo; but, as he had previouſly deſtroyed their power, their new honours were but empty titles. He took care to pardon all who had been in arms againſt him, but not till he had deprived them of the power of reſiſtance. He even ſet up once more the ſtatues of Pompey, which, however, as Cicero obſerved, he did only to ſecure his own. In ſhort, if his clemency, his juſtice, and moderation, did not proceed from virtue, yet they had all the effect of virtues in the ſtate, which anſwered the purpoſe of the public as well.

The reſt of this extraordinary man's life was employed for the advantage of his country. He adorned the city with magnificent buildings; he rebuilt Carthage and Corinth, ſending colonies to both cities; he undertook to level ſeveral mountains in Italy, to drain the Pontine marſhes near Rome, and deſigned to cut through the

iſthmus of Peloponneſus. Thus, with a mind that could never remain inactive, he meditated mighty projects and deſigns beyond the limits of the longeſt life; but the greateſt of all was his intended expedition againſt the Parthians, by which he deſigned to revenge the death of Craſſus, who, having penetrated too far into their country, was overthrown, himſelf taken priſoner, and put to a cruel death, by having molten gold poured down his throat, as a puniſhment for his former avarice. From thence Cæſar intended to paſs through Hyrcania, and enter Scythia along the banks of the Caſpian ſea; then to open himſelf a way through the immeaſurable foreſts of Germany into Gaul, and ſo to return to Rome. Theſe were the aims of ambition: the jealouſy of a few individuals put an end to them all.

The ſenate, with an adulation which marked the degeneracy of the times, continued to load him with freſh honours, and he received them with equal vanity. They called one of the months of the year after his name; they ſtamped money with his image; they ordered his ſtatue to be ſet up in all the cities of the empire; they inſtituted public ſacrifices on his birth-day; and talked, even in his life-time, of enrolling him among the number of their gods. Antony, at one of the public feſtivals, fooliſhly ventured to offer him a diadem; but he put it back again, refuſing

refuſing it ſeveral times, and receiving, at every refuſal, loud acclamations from the people. One day, when the ſenate ordered him ſome particular honours, he neglected to riſe from his ſeat; and from that moment envy began to mark him for deſtruction. Mankind are ever moſt offended at any treſpaſs on ceremony, ſince a violation of decorum is uſually an indication of contempt. It began, therefore, to be rumoured that he intended to make himſelf king; and, tho' in fact he was poſſeſſed of the power, the people, who had an utter averſion to the name, could not bear his aſſuming the title. Whether he really deſigned to aſſume that empty honour, muſt now for ever remain a ſecret; but certain it is, that the unſuſpecting openneſs of his conduct marked ſomething like a confidence in the innocence of his intentions. When informed by thoſe about him of the jealouſies of many perſons who envied his power, he was heard to ſay, That he had rather die once by treaſon, than to live continually in apprehenſion of it. When adviſed by ſome to beware of Brutus, in whom he had for ſome time repoſed the greateſt confidence, he opened his breaſt, all ſcarred with wounds, ſaying, "Can you think Brutus cares for ſuch poor pil-"lage as this?" and being one night at ſupper, as his friends diſputed among themſelves what death was eaſieſt, he replied, That which was moſt ſudden, and leaſt foreſeen. But to convince

the world how little he had to apprehend from his enemies, he diſbanded his company of Spaniſh guards, which facilitated the enterprize againſt his life; for he ſhould have conſidered, that confidence in an uſurper is but raſhneſs.

A deep-laid conſpiracy was abſolutely in agitation againſt him, compoſed of no leſs than ſixty ſenators. They were ſtill the more formidable as the generality of them were of his own party; and, being raiſed above other citizens, felt more ſtrongly the weight of a ſingle ſuperior. At the head of this conſpiracy were Brutus, whoſe life Cæſar had ſpared after the battle of Pharſalia; and Caſſius, who was pardoned ſoon after; both prætors for the preſent year. Brutus made it his chief glory to have been deſcended from that Brutus who firſt gave liberty to Rome. The paſſion for freedom ſeemed to have been tranſmitted with the blood of his anceſtors down to him. But though he deteſted tyranny, yet he could not forbear loving the tyrant, from whom he had received the moſt ſignal benefits. However, the love of his country broke all the ties of private friendſhip, and he entered into a conſpiracy which was to deſtroy his benefactor. Caſſius, on the other hand, was impetuous and proud, and hated Cæſar's perſon ſtill more than his cauſe. He had often ſought an opportunity of gratifying his revenge by aſſaſſination,

tion, which took riſe rather from private than from public motives.

The conſpirators, to give a colour of juſtice to their proceedings, remitted the execution of their deſigns to the ides of March, the day on which Cæſar was to be offered the crown. The augurs had foretold that this day would be fatal to him, and the night preceding he heard his wife Calphurnia lamenting in her ſleep, and being awakened ſhe confeſſed to him, that ſhe dreamt of his being aſſaſſinated in her arms. Theſe omens, in ſome meaſure, began to change his intentions of going to the ſenate, as he had reſolved that day; but one of the conſpirators coming in, prevailed upon him to keep his reſolution, telling him of the reproach that would attend his ſtaying at home till his wife had lucky dreams, and of the preparations that were made for his appearance. As he went along to the ſenate, a ſlave, who haſtened to him with information of the conſpiracy, attempted to come near him, but could not for the crowd. Artemidorus, a Greek philoſopher, who had diſcovered the whole plot, delivered him a memorial containing the heads of his information; but Cæſar gave it, with other papers, to one of his ſecretaries without reading, as was uſual in things of this nature. Being at length entered the Senate-houſe, where the conſpirators were prepared to receive him, he met one Spurina, an augur,

who had foretold his danger, to whom he ſaid, ſmiling, "Well, Spurina, the ides of March "are come. Yes, (replied the augur) but "they are not yet over." As ſoon as he had taken his place, the conſpirators came near him under pretence of ſaluting him; and Cimber, who was one of them, approached in a ſuppliant poſture, pretending to ſue for his brother's pardon, who had been baniſhed by his order. All the conſpirators ſeconded him with great earneſtneſs; and Cimber, ſeeming to ſue with ſtill greater ſubmiſſion, took hold of the bottom of his robe, holding him ſo as to prevent his riſing. This was the ſignal agreed on. Caſca, who was behind, ſtabbed him, though ſlightly, in the ſhoulder. Cæſar inſtantly turned round, and, with the ſtyle of his tablet, wounded him in the arm. However, all the conſpirators were now alarmed, and encloſing him round, he received a ſecond ſtab from an unknown hand in the breaſt, while Caſſius wounded him in the face. He ſtill defended himſelf with great vigour, ruſhing among them, and throwing down ſuch as oppoſed him, till he ſaw Brutus among the conſpirators, who, coming up, ſtruck his dagger into his thigh. From that moment Cæſar thought no more of defending himſelf, but looking ſtedfaſtly on him, exclaimed, "And you too, my ſon!" Then covering his head, and ſpreading his robe before him,

him, in order to fall with greater decency, he ſunk down at the baſe of Pompey's ſtatue, after receiving three and twenty wounds from hands which he vainly ſuppoſed he had diſarmed by his benefits.

Cæſar was killed in the fifty-ſixth year of his age, and about fourteen years after he began the conqueſt of the world. If we examine his hiſtory, we ſhall be equally at a loſs whether moſt to admire his great abilities or his ſtill greater fortune. To pretend to ſay that from the beginning he planned the ſubjection of his native country, is doing no great credit to his well-known penetration, as a thouſand obſtacles lay in his way, which fortune, rather than conduct, was to ſurmount. No man, therefore, of his ſagacity, would have begun a ſcheme in which the chances of ſucceeding were ſo many againſt him: it is moſt probable that, like all very ſucceſsful men, he only made the beſt of every occurrence; and his ambition riſing with his good fortune, from at firſt being contented with humbler aims he at laſt began to think of governing the world, when he found ſcarce any obſtacle to oppoſe him. Such is the diſpoſition of man, whoſe cravings after power are always moſt inſatiable when he enjoys the greateſt ſhare.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

From the Death of Cæſar to the Battle of Actium and the Death of Antony, which ſettled the Conſtitution in Auguſtus.

UPON the death of Cæſar a conjuncture happened which was never known before: there was no longer any tyrant, and yet liberty was extinguiſhed; for the cauſes which had contributed to its deſtruction ſtill ſubſiſted to prevent its revival. The ſenate had made an ill uſe of their power in the times of Sylla, and the people ſhuddered at the thought of truſting them with it once more.

As ſoon as the conſpirators had diſpatched Cæſar, they began to addreſs themſelves to the ſenate, in order to vindicate the motives of their enterprize, and to excite them to join in procuring their country's freedom; but the univerſal coldneſs with which their expoſtulations were received, ſoon taught them to fear their conduct would not meet with many advocates. All the ſenators, who were not accomplices, fled with ſuch precipitation, that the lives of ſome of them were endangered in the throng. The people alſo, being now alarmed, left their uſual occu-

occupations, and ran tumultuouſly through the city; ſome actuated by their fears, and ſtill more by a deſire of plunder. In this ſtate of confuſion, the conſpirators all retired to the capitol, and guarded its acceſſes by a body of gladiators which Brutus had in pay. It was in vain they alledged that they only ſtruck for freedom, and had killed a tyrant who uſurped the rights of mankind: the people, accuſtomed to luxury and eaſe, little regarded their profeſſions, dreading more the dangers of poverty than of ſubjection.

The friends of the late dictator now began to find that this was the time for coming into greater power than before, and for ſatisfying their ambition, under the veil of promoting juſtice. Of this number was Antony, whom we have already ſeen acting as a lieutenant under Cæſar, and governing Rome in his abſence with little juſtice or decency. He was a man of moderate abilities and exceſſive vices, ambitious of power, only becauſe it gave his pleaſures a wider range to riot in; but ſkilled in war, to which he had been trained from his youth. He was conſul for this year, and reſolved, with Lepidus, who was fond of commotions, like himſelf, to ſeiſe this opportunity of gaining that power which Cæſar had died for uſurping. Lepidus, therefore, took poſſeſſion of the Forum, with a band of ſoldiers at his

his devotion; and Antony, being conſul, was permitted to command them. Their firſt ſtep was to poſſeſs themſelves of all Cæſar's papers and money, and the next to convene the ſenate. Never had this auguſt aſſembly been convened upon ſo delicate an occaſion, as it was to determine whether Cæſar had been a legal magiſtrate, or a tyrannical uſurper; and whether thoſe who killed him merited rewards or puniſhments. There were many among them who had received all their promotions from Cæſar, and had acquired large fortunes in conſequence of his appointments; to vote him an uſurper, therefore, would be to endanger their property; and yet, to vote him innocent, might endanger the ſtate. In this dilemma, they ſeemed willing to reconcile extremes; wherefore they approved all the acts of Cæſar, and yet granted a general pardon to all the conſpirators.

This decree was very far from giving Antony ſatisfaction, as it granted ſecurity to a number of men who were the avowed enemies of tyranny, and who would be foremoſt in oppoſing his ſchemes of reſtoring abſolute power. As, therefore, the ſenate had ratified all Cæſar's acts without diſtinction, he formed a ſcheme, upon this, of making him rule, when dead, as imperiouſly as he had done when living. Being, as was ſaid, poſſeſſed of Cæſar's books of accounts, he ſo far gained upon his ſecretary as

to

to make him inſert whatever he thought proper. By theſe means, great ſums of money, which Cæſar would never have beſtowed, were there diſtributed among the people; and every man who had any ſeditious deſigns againſt the government was there ſure of finding a gratuity. Things being in this forwardneſs, he demanded that Cæſar's funeral obſequies ſhould be performed, which the ſenate now could not decently forbid, as they had never declared him a tyrant; accordingly, the body was brought forth into the forum with the utmoſt ſolemnity; and Antony, who charged himſelf with theſe laſt duties of friendſhip, began his operations upon the paſſions of the people by the prevailing motives of private intereſt. He firſt read them Cæſar's will, in which he had left Octavius, his ſiſter's grandſon, his heir, permitting him to take the name of Cæſar; and three parts of his private fortune Brutus was to inherit in caſe of his death. The Roman people were left the gardens which he had on the other ſide of the Tyber; and every citizen, in particular, was to receive three hundred ſeſterces. This laſt bequeſt not a little contributed to increaſe the people's affection for their late dictator; they now began to conſider Cæſar as a father, who, not ſatisfied with doing them the greateſt good while living, thought of benefiting them even after death. As Antony

continued reading, the multitude began to be moved, and ſighs and lamentations were heard from every quarter. Antony, ſeeing the audience favourable to his deſigns, now began to addreſs the aſſembly in a more pathetick ſtrain: he preſented before them Cæſar's bloody robe, and, as he unfolded it, took care they ſhould obſerve the number of ſtabs in it: then diſplaying an image which to them appeared the body of Cæſar all covered with wounds; "This, "(cried he) this is all that is left of him who "was befriended by the gods, and loved by "mankind even to adoration. This is he to "whom we vowed eternal fidelity, and whoſe "perſon both the ſenate and the people con-"curred to declare ſacred. Behold now the "execution of theſe vows! behold here the "proofs of our gratitude! The braveſt of "men deſtroyed by the moſt ungrateful of "mankind! He, who ſhowered down his be-"nefits upon the betrayers, found his death "as the only return! Is there none to re-"venge his cauſe? Is there none who, mind-"ful of former benefits, will ſhow himſelf now "deſerving of them? Yes, there is one: Be-"hold me, O Jupiter, thou avenger of the "brave, ready to offer up my life on this glo-"rious occaſion! And you, ye deities, pro-"tectors of the Roman empire, accept my "ſolemn vows, and favour the rectitude of my "intentions!"

" intentions!" The people could now no longer contain their indignation; they unanimouſly cried out for revenge; all the ſoldiers who had fought under Cæſar burnt, with his body, their coronets, and other marks of conqueſt with which he had honoured them. A great number of the firſt matrons in the city threw in their ornaments alſo; till, at length, rage ſucceeding to ſorrow, the multitude ran, with flaming brands from the pile, to ſet fire to the conſpirators' houſes. In this rage of reſentment, meeting with one Cinna, whom they miſtook for another of the ſame name who was in the conſpiracy, they tore him in pieces. The conſpirators themſelves, however, being well guarded, repulſed the multitude with no great trouble; but perceiving the rage of the people, they thought it, ſoon after, ſafeſt to retire from the city. The populace, being thus left to themſelves, ſet no bounds on their ſorrow and gratitude. Divine honours were granted him, an altar was erected on the place where his body was burnt, where afterwards was erected a column, inſcribed to the father of his country.

In the mean time, Antony, who had excited this flame, reſolved to make the moſt of the occaſion. Having gained the people, by his zeal in Cæſar's cauſe, he next endeavoured to bring over the ſenate, by a ſeeming concern for the freedom of the ſtate. He therefore propoſed

to recall Sextus, Pompey's only remaining ſon, who had concealed himſelf in Spain ſince the death of his father; and to grant him the command of all the fleets of the empire. His next ſtep to their confidence, was the quelling a ſedition of the people who roſe to revenge the death of Cæſar, and putting their leader Amathus to death, who pretended to be the ſon of Marius. He, after this, pretended to dread the reſentment of the multitude, and demanded a guard for the ſecurity of his perſon. The ſenate granted his requeſt; and, under this pretext, he drew round him a body of ſix thouſand reſolute men, attached to his intereſt, and ready to execute his commands. Thus he continued every day making rapid ſtrides to abſolute power; all the authority of government was lodged in his hands and thoſe of his two brothers, who ſhared among them the conſular, tribunitian, and prætorian power. His vows to revenge Cæſar's death ſeemed either poſtponed, or totally forgotten; and his only aims ſeemed to be to confirm himſelf in that power, which he had thus artfully acquired. But an obſtacle to his ambition ſeemed to ariſe from a quarter in which he leaſt expected it. This was from Octavius Cæſar, afterwards called Auguſtus, as we ſhall henceforth take leave to call him, though he did not receive the title till long after. Auguſtus, who was the grand

nephew

nephew and adopted ſon of Cæſar, was at Appollonia when his kinſman was ſlain. He was then but eighteen years old; and had been ſent to that city to improve himſelf in the ſtudy of Grecian literature. Upon the news of Cæſar's death, notwithſtanding the earneſt diſſuaſions of all his friends, he reſolved to return to Rome, to claim the inheritance, and revenge the death of his uncle. From the former profeſſions of Antony, he expected to find him a warm aſſiſtant to his aims; and he doubted not, by his concurrence, to take ſignal vengeance on all who had a hand in the conſpiracy. However he was greatly diſappointed. Antony, whoſe projects were all to aggrandiſe himſelf, gave him but a very cold reception; and, inſtead of granting him the fortune left him by the will, delayed the payment of it upon various pretences, hoping to check his ambition, by limiting his circumſtances. But Auguſtus ſeems to have inherited, not only the wealth, but the inclinations of his uncle: inſtead, therefore, of abating his claims, he even ſold his own patrimonial eſtate, to pay ſuch legacies as Cæſar had left; and particularly that to the people. By theſe means he gained a degree of popularity, which his enemies vainly laboured to diminiſh; and which, in fact, he had many other methods to procure. His converſation was elegant and inſinuating; his face comely and

graceful; and his affection to the late dictator ſo ſincere, that every perſon was charmed, either with his piety or his addreſs. But what added ſtill more to his intereſt, was the name of Cæſar, which he had aſſumed; and, in conſequence of which, the former followers of his uncle now flocked in great numbers to him. All theſe he managed with ſuch art, that, while he gained their affections, he never loſt their eſteem; ſo that Antony now began to conceive a violent jealouſy for the talents of his young opponent, and ſecretly laboured to counteract all his deſigns. In fact, he did not want reaſon; for the army near Rome, which had long wiſhed to ſee the conſpirators puniſhed, began to turn from him to his rival, whom they ſaw more ſincerely bent on gratifying their deſires. Antony having alſo procured the government of Hither Gaul from the people, two of his legions, that he had brought home from his former government of Macedonia, went over to Auguſtus, notwithſtanding all his remonſtrances to detain them. This produced, as uſual, interviews, complaints, recriminations, and pretended reconciliations, which only tended to widen the difference, ſo that, at length, both ſides prepared for war. Thus the ſtate was divided into three diſtinct factions: that of Auguſtus, who aimed at procuring Cæſar's inheritance, and revenging his death;

that

that of Antony, whoſe ſole view was to obtain abſolute power; and that of the conſpirators, who endeavoured to reſtore the ſenate to its former authority.

Antony, being raiſed by the people to his new government of Ciſalpine Gaul, contrary to the inclinations of the ſenate, reſolved to enter upon his province immediately, and oppoſe Brutus, who commanded a ſmall body of troops there, while his army was yet entire. He accordingly left Rome, and marching thither, commanded Brutus to depart. Brutus, being unable to oppoſe him, retired with his forces; but being purſued by Antony, he was at laſt beſieged in the city of Mutina, of which he ſent word to the ſenate.

In the mean while, Auguſtus, who, by this time, had raiſed a body of ten thouſand men, returned to Rome; and, being reſolved, before he attempted to take vengeance on the conſpirators, if poſſible, to diminiſh the power of Antony; began, by bringing over the ſenate to ſecond his deſigns. In this he ſucceeded, by the credit of Cicero, who long had hated Antony, becauſe he thought him the enemy of the ſtate. Accordingly, by means of his great eloquence, a decree was paſſed, ordering Antony to raiſe the ſiege of Mutina, to evacuate Ciſalpine Gaul, and to await the further orders of the ſenate upon the banks of the Rubicon,

bicon. It may eaſily be ſuppoſed, that, in the preſent ſtate of government in Rome, a commander, at the head of a victorious army, would pay little attention to an ineffective decree. Antony treated the order with contempt; and, inſtead of obeying, began to profeſs his diſpleaſure at being hitherto ſo ſubmiſſive. Nothing now, therefore, remained for the ſenate, but to declare him an enemy to the ſtate, and to ſend Auguſtus, with the army he had raiſed, to curb his inſolence. Auguſtus was very ready to offer his army for this expedition, in order to revenge his own private injuries, before he undertook thoſe of the publick. The two conſuls, Hirtius and Panſa, joined alſo their forces; and thus combined, they marched, at the head of a numerous army, againſt Antony, into Ciſalpine Gaul. He, on his part, was not ſlow in oppoſing them. After one or two ineffectual conflicts, both armies came to a general engagement; in which Antony was defeated, and compelled to fly to Lepidus, who commanded a body of forces in Farther Gaul. This victory however, which promiſed the ſenate ſo much ſucceſs, produced effects very different from their expectations. The two conſuls were mortally wounded; but Panſa, previous to his death, calling Auguſtus to his bed ſide, adviſed him to join with Antony, telling him, that the ſenate only deſired to depreſs both,

by

by oppoſing them to each other. The advice of the dying conſul ſunk deep on the ſpirits of Auguſtus; ſo that, from that time, he only ſought a pretext to break with them. Their giving the command of a part of his army to Decimus Brutus, and their denying him a triumph ſoon after, ſerved to alienate his mind entirely from them, and made him reſolve to join Antony and Lepidus. He was willing, however, to try the ſenate thoroughly, before he came to an open rupture; wherefore he ſent to demand the conſulſhip, which was refuſed him. He then thought himſelf obliged to keep no meaſures with that aſſembly, but privately ſent to ſound the inclinations of Antony and Lepidus, concerning a junction of forces, and found them as eager to aſſiſt, as the ſenate was to oppoſe him. Antony was, in fact, the general of both armies; and Lepidus was only nominally ſo, his ſoldiers refuſing to obey him upon the approach of the former. Wherefore, upon being aſſured of the aſſiſtance of Auguſtus, upon their arrival in Italy, they ſoon croſſed the Alps with an army of ſeventeen legions, breathing revenge againſt all who had oppoſed their deſigns.

The ſenate now began, too late, to perceive their error, in offering to diſoblige Auguſtus; they, therefore, gave him the conſulſhip, which they had ſo lately refuſed: and, to prevent his

joining with Antony, flattered him with new honours, and gave him a power ſuperior to all law. The firſt uſe Auguſtus made of his new authority, was to procure a law for the condemnation of Brutus and Caſſius; and, in ſhort, to join his forces with thoſe of Antony and Lepidus.

The meeting of theſe three uſurpers of their country's freedom was near Mutina, upon a little iſland of the river Panarus. Their mutual ſuſpicions were the cauſe of their meeting in a place where they could not fear any treachery; for, even in their union, they could not diveſt themſelves of mutual diffidence. Lepidus firſt entered; and, finding all things ſafe, made the ſignal for the other two to approach. They embraced each other upon their firſt meeting; and Auguſtus began the conference, by thanking Antony for his zeal, in putting Decimus Brutus to death; who being abandoned by his army, was taken, as he was endeavouring to eſcape into Macedonia, and beheaded by Antony's command. They then entered upon the buſineſs that lay before them, without any retroſpection of the paſt. Their conference laſted for three days; and, in this period, they fixed a diviſion of government, and determined upon the fate of thouſands. One can ſcarce avoid wondering how that city, which gave birth to ſuch men as Fabricius and Cato, could now be a tame

tame ſpectator of a conference which bartered away the lives and liberties of the people at their pleaſure. To ſee theſe three men ſeated, without attendants, on the higheſt part of a deſolate iſland, marking out whole cities and nations for deſtruction, and yet none to oppoſe their deſigns, ſhows what changes may quickly be wrought in the braveſt people in a very ſhort time. The reſult of their conference was, that the ſupreme authority ſhould be lodged in their hands, under the title of the Triumvirate, for the ſpace of five years; that Antony ſhould have Gaul; Lepidus, Spain; and Auguſtus, Africa, and the Mediterranean iſlands. As for Italy, and the eaſtern provinces, they were to remain in common, until their general enemy was entirely ſubdued. But the laſt article of their union was a dreadful one: it was agreed, that all their enemies ſhould be deſtroyed, of which each preſented a liſt. In theſe were compriſed, not only the enemies, but the friends of the Triumvirate, ſince the partiſans of the one were often found among the oppoſers of the other. Thus Lepidus gave up his brother Paulus to the vengeance of his colleague; Antony permitted the proſcription of his uncle Lucius; and Auguſtus delivered up the great Cicero. The moſt ſacred rights of nature were violated; three hundred ſenators, and above two thouſand knights, were included in this terrible

terrible proſcription; their fortunes were confiſcated, and their murderers enriched with the ſpoil. Rome ſoon felt the effects of this infernal union: nothing but cries and lamentations were to be heard through all the city, ſcarce an houſe eſcaping without a murder. No man dared to refuſe entrance to the aſſaſſins, although he had no other hopes of ſafety; and this city, that was once the beauty of the world, ſeemed now reduced to deſolation without an army; and now felt the effects of an invading enemy, with all the deliberate malice of cool-blooded ſlaughter.

In this horrid carnage, Cicero was one of thoſe principally ſought after, who, for awhile, ſeemed to evade the malice of his purſuers; but upon hearing of the ſlaughters that were committed at Rome, he ſet forward from his Tuſculan villa, towards the ſea-ſide, with an intent to tranſport himſelf directly out of the reach of his enemies. There finding a veſſel ready, he preſently embarked; but the winds being averſe, and the ſea wholly uneaſy to him, after he had ſailed about two leagues along the coaſt, he was obliged to land, and ſpend the night upon ſhore. From thence he was forced, by the importunity of his ſervants, on board again; but was ſoon after obliged to land at a country ſeat of his, a mile from the ſhore, weary of life, and declaring he was reſolved to

die

die in that country which he had ſo often ſaved. Here he ſlept ſoundly for ſome time, till his ſervants once more forced him away in a litter towards the ſhip, having heard that he was purſued by a party of Antony's aſſaſſins. They were ſcarce departed, when the aſſaſſins arrived at his houſe, and, perceiving him to be fled, purſued him immediately towards the ſea, and overtook him in a wood that lay near the ſhore. Their leader was one Popilius Lenus, a tribune of the army, whoſe life Cicero had formerly defended and ſaved. As ſoon as the ſoldiers appeared, the ſervants prepared to defend their maſter's life, at the hazard of their own; but Cicero commanded them to ſet him down, and to make no reſiſtance. They ſoon cut off his head and his hands, returning with them to Rome, as the moſt agreeable preſent to their cruel employer. Antony, who was then at Rome, received them with extreme joy, rewarded the murderer with a large ſum of money, and placed Cicero's head on the roſtrum, as if there once more to reproach his vile inhumanity. Cicero was ſlain in the ſixty-third year of his age, but not until he had ſeen his country ruined before him. "The glory he "obtained (ſays Julius Cæſar) was as much "above all other triumphs, as the extent of the "Roman genius was above that of the bounds "of the Roman empire."

Thus

Thus the proſcription went on to rage for ſome time with as much violence as when it began. As many as could eſcape its cruelty fled either into Macedonia to Brutus, or found refuge with young Pompey, who was now in Sicily, and covered the Mediterranean with his numerous navy. Their cruelties were not aimed at the men alone; but the ſofter ſex were in danger of being marked as objects either of avarice or reſentment. They made out a liſt of fourteen hundred women of the beſt quality, and the richeſt in the city, who were ordered to give an account of their fortunes, to be taxed in proportion. But this ſeemed ſo unpopular a meaſure, and was ſo firmly oppoſed by Hortenſia, who ſpoke againſt it, that, inſtead of fourteen hundred women, they were content to tax only four hundred. However, they made up the deficiency, by extending the tax upon men; near an hundred thouſand, as well citizens as ſtrangers, were compelled to furniſh ſupplies, to the ſubverſion of their country's freedom. At laſt, both the avarice and vengeance of the Triumviri ſeemed fully ſatisfied, and they went into the ſenate to declare that the proſcription was at an end; and thus having deluged the city with blood, Auguſtus and Antony, leaving Lepidus to defend Rome in their abſence, marched with their army to oppoſe the conſpirators, who

were

were now at the head of a formidable army in Aſia.

Brutus and Caſſius, the principal of the conſpirators againſt Cæſar, being compelled to quit Rome, went into Greece, where they perſuaded the Roman ſtudents at Athens to declare in the cauſe of freedom; then parting, the former raiſed a powerful army in Macedonia, and the adjacent countries, while the latter went into Syria, where he ſoon became maſter of twelve legions, and reduced his opponent, Dollabella, to ſuch ſtraits as to force him to lay violent hands on himſelf. Both armies ſoon after joining at Smyrna, the ſight of ſuch a formidable force began to revive the declining ſpirits of the party, and to re-unite the two generals ſtill more cloſely, between whom there had been, ſome time before, a ſlight miſunderſtanding. In ſhort, having quitted Italy like diſtreſſed exiles, without having one ſingle ſoldier or one town that owned their command, they now found themſelves at the head of a flouriſhing army, furniſhed with all the neceſſaries for carrying on the war, and in a condition to ſupport a conteſt where the empire of the world depended on the event. This ſucceſs in raiſing levies was entirely owing to the juſtice, moderation, and great humanity of Brutus, who, in every inſtance, ſeemed ſtudious of the happineſs of his country, and not his own.

It was in this flouriſhing ſtate of their affairs, that the conſpirators had formed a reſolution of going againſt Cleopatra, who, on her ſide, had made great preparations to aſſiſt their opponents. However, they were diverted from this purpoſe by an information that Auguſtus and Antony were now upon their march, with forty legions to oppoſe them. Brutus now, therefore, moved to have their army paſs over into Greece and Macedonia, and there meet the enemy; but Caſſius ſo far prevailed, as to have the Rhodians and Lycians firſt reduced, who had refuſed their uſual contributions. This expedition was immediately put in execution, and extraordinary contributions were raiſed by that means, the Rhodians having ſcarce any thing left them but their lives. The Lycians ſuffered ſtill more ſeverely; for, having ſhut themſelves up in the city of Xanthius, they defended the place againſt Brutus with ſuch fury, that neither his arts nor entreaties could prevail upon them to ſurrender. At length, the town being ſet on fire, by their attempting to burn the works of the Romans, Brutus, inſtead of laying hold of this opportunity to ſtorm the place, made every effort to preſerve it, entreating his ſoldiers to try all means of extinguiſhing the fire: but the deſperate phrenzy of the citizens was not to be mollified. Far from thinking themſelves obliged

to

to their generous enemy, for the efforts which were made to ſave them, they reſolved to periſh in the flames. Wherefore, inſtead of extinguiſhing, they did all in their power to augment the fire, by throwing in wood, dry reeds, and all kinds of fuel. Nothing could exceed the diſtreſs of Brutus, upon ſeeing the townſmen thus reſolutely bent on deſtroying themſelves; he rode about the fortifications, ſtretching out his hands to the Xanthians, and conjuring them to have pity on themſelves and their city; but, inſenſible to his expoſtulations, they ruſhed into the flames with deſperate obſtinacy, and the whole ſoon became an heap of undiſtinguiſhable ruin. At this horrid ſpectacle Brutus melted into tears, offering a reward to every ſoldier who ſhould bring him a Lycian alive. The number of thoſe whom it was poſſible to ſave from their own fury, amounted to no more than one hundred and fifty.

Brutus and Caſſius met once more at Sardis, where, after the uſual ceremonies were paſſed between them, they reſolved to have a private conference together. They ſhut themſelves up, therefore, in the firſt convenient houſe, with expreſs orders to their ſervants to give no admiſſion. Brutus began, by reprimanding Caſſius for having diſpoſed of offices, which ſhould ever be the reward of merit, and for having over-taxed the tributary ſtates. Caſſius

retorted the imputation of avarice with the more bitterneſs, as he knew the charge to be groundleſs. The debate grew warm, till, from loud ſpeaking, they burſt into tears. Their friends, who were ſtanding at the door, overheard the increaſing vehemence of their voices, and began to dread for the conſequences, till Favonius, who valued himſelf upon a cynical boldneſs, that knew no reſtraint, entering the room with a jeſt, calmed their mutual animoſity. Caſſius was ready enough to forego his anger, being a man of great abilities, but of uneven diſpoſition; not averſe to pleaſure in private company; and, upon the whole, of morals not quite ſincere. But the conduct of Brutus was always perfectly ſteady. An even gentleneſs, a noble elevation of ſentiments, a ſtrength of mind over which neither vice nor pleaſure could have any influence, an inflexible firmneſs in the defence of juſtice, compoſed the character of that great man. In conſequence of theſe qualities, he was beloved by his army, doated upon by his friends, and admired by all good men. After their conference, night coming on, Caſſius invited Brutus and his friends to an entertainment, where freedom and chearfulneſs, for awhile, took place of political anxiety, and ſoftened the ſeverity of wiſdom. Upon retiring home it was, that Brutus, as Plutarch tells the ſtory, ſaw a ſpectre in his tent. He naturally

rally ſlept but little, and he had acquired this habit of watchfulneſs by cuſtom and great ſobriety. He never allowed himſelf to ſleep in the day time, as was then common in Rome; and only gave ſo much of the night to ſleep as could barely renew the natural functions. But eſpecially now, when oppreſſed with ſuch various cares, he only gave a ſhort time, after his nightly repaſt, to reſt; and, waking about midnight, generally read or ſtudied till morning. It was in the dead of night, when the whole camp was perfectly quiet, that Brutus was thus employed in reading by a lamp that was juſt expiring. On a ſudden he thought he heard a noiſe as if ſomebody entered, and looking towards the door he perceived it open. A gigantic figure, with a frightful aſpect, ſtood before him, and continued to gaze upon him with ſilent ſeverity. At laſt Brutus had courage to ſpeak to it: "Art thou a dæmon or a mortal man? "and why comeſt thou to me?"—"Brutus, "(replied the phantom) I am thy evil genius, "thou ſhalt ſee me again at Philippi."—"Well, "then (anſwered Brutus without being diſcom-"poſed) we ſhall meet again." Upon which the phantom vaniſhed, and Brutus calling to his ſervants, aſked if they had ſeen any thing; to which replying in the negative, he again reſumed his ſtudies. But as he was ſtruck with ſo ſtrange an occurrence, he mentioned it the

next day to Caſſius, who, being an Epicurean, aſcribed it to the effect of an imagination too much exerciſed by vigilance and anxiety. Brutus appeared ſatisfied by this ſolution of his late terrors; and as Antony and Auguſtus were now advanced into Macedonia, Brutus and his colleague ſoon paſſed over into Thrace, and advanced to the city of Philippi, near which the forces of the triumviri were poſted.

All mankind now began to regard the approaching armies with terror and ſuſpence. The empire of the world depended upon the fate of a battle; as from victory on the one ſide, they had to expect freedom; but from the other, a ſovereign with abſolute command. Brutus was the only man who looked upon theſe great events before him with calmneſs and tranquillity. Indifferent as to ſucceſs, and ſatisfied with having done his duty, he ſaid to one of his friends, "If I gain the victory, I ſhall reſtore "liberty to my country; if I loſe it, by dying, "I ſhall be delivered from ſlavery myſelf; my "condition is fixed, and I run no hazard."

The republican army conſiſted of fourſcore thouſand foot, and twenty thouſand horſe. The army of the triumviri amounted to an hundred thouſand foot, and thirteen thouſand horſe. Thus complete, on both ſides, they met and encamped near each other upon the plains of Philippi, a city upon the confines of Thrace.

This

This city was ſituated upon a mountain, towards the weſt of which a plain ſtretched itſelf, by a gentle declivity, almoſt fifteen leagues to the banks of the river Strymon. In this plain, about two miles from the town, were two little hills at about a mile diſtance from each other, defended on one ſide by mountains, on the other by a marſh which communicated with the ſea. It was upon theſe two hills that Brutus and Caſſius fixed their camps: Brutus on the hill towards the north; Caſſius on that towards the ſouth: and in the intermediate ſpace which ſeparated them, they caſt up lines and a parapet from one hill to the other. Thus they kept a firm communication between the two camps, which mutually defended each other. In this commodious ſituation they could act as they thought proper, and give battle only when it was thought to their advantage to engage. Behind was the ſea, which furniſhed them with all kinds of proviſions; and at twelve miles diſtance, the iſland of Thaſos which ſerved them for a general magazine. The triumviri, on the other hand, were encamped on the plain below, and were obliged to bring their proviſions from fifteen leagues diſtance; ſo that their ſcheme and intereſt was to bring on a battle as ſoon as they could. This they offered ſeveral times, drawing out their men from their camp, and provoking the enemy

to engage. On the contrary, theſe contented themſelves with drawing up their troops at the head of their camps, but without deſcending to the plain. This reſolution of poſtponing the battle, was all that the republican army had for it; and Caſſius, who was aware of his advantage, reſolved to harraſs the enemy rather than engage them. But Brutus began to ſuſpect the fidelity of ſome of his officers, ſo that he uſed all his influence to perſuade Caſſius to change his reſolution, "I am impatient (ſaid "he) to put an end to the miſeries of mankind, "and in that I have hopes of ſucceeding "whether I fall or conquer." His wiſhes were ſoon gratified; for Antony's ſoldiers having, with great labour, made a road through the marſh which lay to the left of Caſſius's camp, by that means opened a communication with the iſland of Thaſos, which lay behind him. Both armies, in attempting to poſſeſs themſelves of this road, reſolved, at length, to come to a general engagement. This, however, was contrary to the advice of Caſſius, who declared, that he was forced, as Pompey had formerly been, to expoſe the liberty of Rome to the hazard of a battle. The enſuing morning the two generals gave the ſignal for engaging, and conferred together a little while before the battle began. Caſſius deſired to know how Brutus intended to act in caſe they were unſucceſsful:

ſucceſsful: to which the other replied, "That "ne had formerly, in his writings, condemned "the death of Cato; and maintained that "avoiding calamities by ſuicide, was an inſo- "lent attempt againſt Heaven that ſent them; "but he had now altered his opinions, and, "having given up his life to his country, he "thought he had a right to his own way of "ending it: wherefore he was reſolved to "change a miſerable being here, for a better "hereafter, if fortune proved againſt him."— "Well ſaid, my friend (cried Caſſius em- "bracing him) now we may venture to face "the enemy: for either we ſhall be conquerors "ourſelves, or we ſhall have no cauſe to fear "thoſe who are ſo."

Auguſtus being ſick, the forces of the triumviri were commanded alone by Antony, who began the engagement by a vigorous attack upon the lines of Caſſius. Brutus, on the other ſide, made a dreadful eruption on the army of Auguſtus; and drove forward with ſo much intrepidity, that he broke them upon the firſt charge. Upon this he penetrated as far as the camp, and cutting in pieces thoſe who were left for its defence, his troops immediately began to plunder, but in the mean time the lines of Caſſius were forced and his cavalry put to flight. There was no effort that this unfortunate general did not try to make his infantry ſtand, ſtopping thoſe

that fled, and ſeizing himſelf the colours to rally them. But his own valour alone was not ſufficient to inſpire his timorous army. He ſaw himſelf entirely routed, his camp taken, and himſelf obliged to retire under a little hill at ſome diſtance. Brutus, who had gained a complete victory, was juſt returning at this interval with his triumphant army, when he found that all was loſt on the part of his aſſociate; he ſent out a body of cavalry to bring him news of Caſſius, who perceiving them advance towards him, ſent one Titinius, to inform himſelf whether they were friends or enemies. Titinius ſoon joined this body, who received him with great tranſport, informing him of their ſucceſs; but delaying too long, Caſſius began to miſtake them for what his fears had ſuggeſted, and crying out "that he had expoſed his deareſt friend to be "taken priſoner," he retired to his tent with one of his freedmen, named Pindarus, who ſlew him, and then was never heard of after. Titinius arrived in triumph with the body of horſemen, but his joy was ſoon turned into anguiſh upon ſeeing his friend dead in the tent before him; upon which, accuſing his own delay as the cauſe, he puniſhed it with falling on his ſword. Brutus was by this time informed of the defeat of Caſſius, and ſoon after of his death, as he drew near the camp. He ſeemed ſcarce able to reſtrain the exceſs of his

grief for a man whom he called the laſt of the Romans. He bathed the dead body with his tears, and, telling his friends that he thought Caſſius very happy in being beyond the reach of thoſe misfortunes which remained for them to ſuffer, he ordered him to be privately removed, leſt the knowledge of his death ſhould diſpirit the army. It was only this precipitate deſpair of Caſſius which gave the enemy the advantage, ſince, till then, the republicans might be ſaid to have the ſuperiority.

The firſt care of Brutus, when he became the ſole general, was to aſſemble the diſperſed troops of Caſſius, and animate them with freſh hopes of victory. As they had loſt all they poſſeſſed by the plundering of their camp, he promiſed them two thouſand denarii each man, to make up their loſſes. This once more inſpired them with new ardour; they admired the liberality of their general, and with loud ſhouts proclaimed his former intrepidity. Still, however, he had not confidence ſufficient to face the adverſary, who offered him battle the enſuing day. His aim was to ſtarve his enemies, who were in extreme want of proviſions, their fleet having been lately defeated. But his ſingle opinion was over-ruled by the reſt of his army, who now grew every day more confident of their ſtrength, and more arrogant to their new general. He was, therefore, at laſt, after a

reſpite of twenty days, obliged to comply with their ſolicitations to try the fate of a battle. Both armies being drawn out, they remained a long while oppoſite to each other, without offering to engage. It is ſaid that he himſelf had loſt much of his natural ardour, by having ſeen the ſpectre the night preceding: however, he encouraged his men as much as poſſible, and gave the ſignal for battle within three hours of ſun-ſet. He had, as uſual, the advantage where he commanded in perſon; he bore down the enemy at the head of his infantry, and, ſupported by his cavalry, made a very great ſlaughter. But his left wing, fearing to be taken in flank, ſtretched itſelf out in order to enlarge its front; by means of which it became too weak to ſtand the ſhock of the enemy. It was there that the army of Brutus began to yield; and Antony puſhing forward, drove the enemy ſo far back as to be able to turn and attack Brutus in the rear. The troops which had belonged to Caſſius communicated their terror to the reſt of the forces, till, at laſt, the whole army gave way. Brutus, ſurrounded by the moſt valiant of his officers, fought for a long time with amazing valour. The ſon of Cato fell fighting by his ſide, as alſo the brother of Caſſius; ſo that, at laſt, he was obliged to yield to neceſſity, and fled. In the mean time the two triumviri, now aſſured of victory, expreſsly ordered by

by no means to ſuffer the general to eſcape, for fear he ſhould renew the war. Thus the whole body of the enemy ſeemed chiefly intent on Brutus alone, and his capture ſeemed inevitable. In this deplorable exigence, Lucilius, his friend, was reſolved, by his own death, to effect his general's delivery. Upon perceiving a body of Thracian horſe cloſely purſuing Brutus, and juſt upon the point of taking him, he boldly threw himſelf in their way, telling them that he was Brutus. The Thracians, overjoyed with ſo great a prize, immediately diſpatched ſome of their companions, with the news of their ſucceſs, to the army. Upon which, the ardour of the purſuit now abating, Antony marched out to meet his priſoner, and to haſten his death, or inſult his misfortunes. He was followed by a great number of officers and ſoldiers, ſome ſilently deploring the fate of ſo virtuous a man, others reproaching the mean deſire of life for which he conſented to undergo captivity. Antony now, ſeeing the Thracians approach, began to prepare himſelf for the interview; but the faithful Lucilius, advancing with a chearful air, "It is not Brutus (ſaid "he) that is taken; fortune has not yet had "the power of committing ſo great an outrage "upon virtue. As for my life, it is well loſt "in preſerving his honour; take it, for I have "deceived you." Antony, ſtruck with ſo

much fidelity, pardoned him upon the ſpot; and from that time forward loaded him with benefits and honoured him with his friendſhip.

In the mean time Brutus, with a ſmall number of friends, paſſed over a rivulet, and, night coming on, ſat down under a rock which concealed him from the purſuit of the enemy. After taking breath for a little time, he caſt his eyes up to Heaven, that was all ſpangled with ſtars; he repeated a line from Euripides containing a wiſh to the Gods, "That guilt ſhould "not paſs in this life without puniſhment." To this he added another from the ſame poet: "O virtue! thou empty name, I have wor-"ſhipped thee as a real good, but thou art only "the ſlave of fortune." He then called to mind with great tenderneſs, thoſe whom he had ſeen periſh in battle, and ſent out one Statilius to give him ſome information of thoſe that remained; but he never returned, being killed by a party of the enemies horſe. Brutus, judging very rightly of his fate, now reſolved to die likewiſe, and ſpoke to thoſe who ſtood round him to lend him their laſt ſad aſſiſtance. None of them, however, would render him ſo melancholy a piece of ſervice. Upon this, raiſing himſelf up and ſtretching out his hands, he ſpoke to them with a ſerene countenance, ſaying, "That he was happy in the fidelity of "his friends; happy in the conſciouſneſs of

"his

" his own rectitude; and though he fell, yet " his death was more glorious than the triumphs " of the enemy, ſince they were ſucceſsful in " the cauſe of uſurpation, and he overthrown " in the defence of virtue." He then retired to a little diſtance with Strato, who was his maſter in oratory, and entreated him to do him the laſt office of friendſhip; Strato, however, expreſſed his reluctance in taking upon him ſo ſhocking an office. Brutus, therefore, ſeeing him ſo averſe, called to one of his ſlaves to perform what he ſo ardently deſired; but Strato then offered himſelf, crying out, " That it " ſhould never be ſaid that Brutus in his laſt " extremity, ſtood in need of a ſlave for want of " a friend." Thus ſaying, and averting his head, he preſented the ſword's point to Brutus, who threw himſelf upon it, and immediately expired. Thus died Brutus, and with him all hopes of liberty in Rome. By this famous overthrow, the triumviri became irreſiſtible; and, though Pompey's younger ſon was ſtill alive, and at the head of a powerful army, yet, with the united forces of the empire againſt him, little could be expected from his greateſt efforts.

From the moment of Brutus's death, the triumviri began to act as ſovereigns, and to divide the Roman dominions among them, as their's by right of conqueſt. However, though there

there were apparently three who thus participated all power, yet, in fact, only two were actually poſſeſſed of it, ſince Lepidus was at firſt admitted merely to curb the mutual jealouſy of Antony and Auguſtus; and was poſſeſſed neither of intereſt in the army, nor authority among the people. Their firſt care was to puniſh thoſe whom they had formerly marked for vengeance. Hortenſius, Druſus, and Quintilius Varus, all men of the firſt rank in the commonwealth, either killed themſelves or were ſlain. A ſenator and his ſon were ordered to caſt lots for their lives, but both refuſed it: the father voluntarily gave himſelf up to the executioner, and the ſon ſtabbed himſelf before his face. Another begged to have the rites of burial after his death; to which Auguſtus replied, "That he ſhould find a "grave in the vultures that devoured him." But chiefly the people lamented to ſee the head of Brutus ſent to Rome to be thrown at the foot of Cæſar's ſtatue. His aſhes, however, were ſent to his wife Portia, Cato's daughter, who, following the example of her huſband and father, killed herſelf by ſwallowing burning coals. It is obſerved, that of all thoſe who had a hand in the death of Cæſar, not one died a natural death.

The power of the triumviri being thus eſtabliſhed upon the ruin of the commonwealth, they

they began to think of enjoying that homage to which they had aſpired. Antony went into Greece to receive the flattery of that refined people, and ſpent ſome time at Athens, converſing with the philoſophers, and aſſiſting at their diſputes in perſon. From thence he paſſed over into Aſia, where all the monarchs of the Eaſt, who acknowledged the Roman power, came to pay him their obedience: while the faireſt princeſſes ſtrove to gain his favour by the greatneſs of their preſents, or the allurements of their beauty. In this manner he proceeded from kingdom to kingdom, attended by a crowd of ſovereigns, exacting contributions, diſtributing favours, and giving away crowns with capricious inſolence. He preſented the kingdom of Cappadocia to Syſenes, in prejudice of Ariarathes, only becauſe he found pleaſure in the beauty of Galaphyra, the mother of the former. He ſettled Herod in the kingdom of Judea, and ſupported him againſt every oppoſer. But among all the ſovereigns of the Eaſt who ſhared his favours, none had ſo large a part as Cleopatra, the celebrated queen of Egypt.

It happened that Serapion, her governor in the iſland of Cyprus, had formerly furniſhed ſome ſuccours to the conſpirators; and it was thought proper that ſhe ſhould anſwer for his conduct on that occaſion. Accordingly, having received orders

orders from Antony to clear herſelf of this imputation of infidelity, ſhe readily complied, equally conſcious of the goodneſs of her cauſe, and the power of her beauty. She had already experienced the force of her charms upon Cæſar and Pompey's eldeſt ſon; and the addition of a few years ſince that time, only ſerved to heighten their luſtre. She was in her twenty-ſeventh year, and conſequently improved thoſe allurements by art, which, in earlier age, are ſeldom attended to. Her addreſs and wit were ſtill further heightened, and, though there were ſome women in Rome that were her equals in beauty, none could rival her in the charms of ſeducing converſation. Antony was in Tarſus, a city of Cilicia, when Cleopatra reſolved to attend his court in perſon. She ſailed down the river Cydnus, at the mouth of which the city ſtood, with the moſt ſumptuous pageantry. Her galley was covered with gold, the ſails of purple, large, and floating in the wind. The oars, of ſilver, kept tune to the ſound of flutes and cymbals. She herſelf lay reclined on a couch ſpangled with ſtars of gold, and with ſuch ornaments as poets and painters had uſually aſcribed to Venus. On each ſide were boys like cupids, who fanned her by turns; while the moſt beautiful nymphs, dreſſed like Nereids and Graces, were placed at proper diſtances around her. Upon the banks

of

of the river were kept burning the moſt exquiſite perfumes, while an infinite number of people gazed upon the ſight with a mixture of delight and admiration. So ſoon after relating the death of Brutus, I fancy it will give the reader very little pleaſure minutely to deſcribe the triumphs of vice and infamy: ſuffice it therefore to ſay, that Antony was captivated with her beauty, and abandoning buſineſs to ſatisfy his paſſion, ſhortly after followed her into Egypt. There he continued in all that eaſe and ſoftneſs to which his vicious heart was prone, and which that luxurious people were able to ſupply.

While he remained thus idle in Egypt, Auguſtus who took upon him to lead back the veteran troops and ſettle them in Italy, was aſſiduouſly employed in providing for their ſubſiſtance. He had promiſed them lands at home, as a recompence for their paſt ſervices; but they could not receive their new grants without expelling the former inhabitants. In conſequence of this, multitudes of women, with children in their arms, whoſe tender years and innocence excited univerſal compaſſion, daily filled the temples and the ſtreets with their diſtreſſes. Numbers of huſbandmen and ſhepherds came to deprecate the conqueror's intention, or to obtain an habitation in ſome other part of the world. Among this number

was

was Virgil, the poet, to whom mankind owe more obligations than to a thouſand conquerors, who, in an humble manner, begged permiſſion to retain his patrimonial farm: Virgil obtained his requeſt, but the reſt of his countrymen of Mantua and Cremona were denied mercy.

Italy and Rome now felt the moſt extreme miſeries; the inſolent ſoldiers plundered without reſtraint; while Sextus Pompey, being maſter of the ſea, cut off all foreign communication, and prevented the people's receiving their uſual ſupplies of corn. To theſe miſchiefs were added the commencement of another civil war. Fulvia the wife of Antony, who had been left behind him at Rome, felt for ſome time all the rage of jealouſy, and reſolved to try every method of bringing back her huſband from the arms of Cleopatra. She conſidered a breach with Auguſtus, as the only probable means of rouſing him from his lethargy: and accordingly, with the aſſiſtance of Lucius her brother-in-law, who was then conſul, and entirely devoted to her intereſt, ſhe began to ſow the ſeeds of diſſention. The pretext was, that Antony ſhould have a ſhare in the diſtribution of lands as well as Auguſtus. This produced ſome negotiations between them, and Auguſtus offered to make the veterans themſelves umpires in the diſpute. Lucius refuſed to acquieſce

quieſce; and, being at the head of more than ſix legions, moſtly compoſed of ſuch as were diſpoſſeſſed, he reſolved to compel Auguſtus to accept of whatever terms he ſhould offer. Thus a new war was excited between Auguſtus and Antony; or at leaſt, the generals of the latter aſſumed the ſanction of his name. Auguſtus, however, was victorious: Lucius was hemmed in between two armies, and conſtrained to retreat to Peruſia, a city of Etruria, where he was cloſely beſieged by the oppoſite party. He made many deſperate ſallies, and Fulvia did all in her power to relieve him, but without ſucceſs. He was at laſt, therefore, reduced to ſuch extremity, by famine, that he came out in perſon, and delivered himſelf up to the mercy of the conqueror. Auguſtus received him very honourably, and generouſly pardoned him and all his followers. Thus having concluded the war in a few months, he returned in triumph to Rome, to receive new marks of adulation from the obſequious ſenate.

Antony, who, during this interval, was revelling in all the ſtudied luxuries procured him by his inſidious miſtreſs, having heard of his brother's overthrow, and his wife being compelled to leave Italy, was reſolved to oppoſe Auguſtus without delay. He accordingly ſailed, at the head of a conſiderable fleet, from Alexandria to Tyre; from thence to Cyprus and

Rhodes, and had an interview with Fulvia, his wife, at Athens. He much blamed her for occaſioning the late diſorders; teſtified the utmoſt contempt for her perſon; and leaving her upon her death-bed, at Sycion, haſtened into Italy to fight Auguſtus. They both met at Brunduſium; and it was now thought that the flames of a civil war were going to blaze out once more. The forces of Antony were numerous, but moſtly new raiſed; however, he was aſſiſted by Sextus Pompeius, who, in thoſe oppoſitions of intereſts, was daily coming into power. Auguſtus was at the head of thoſe veterans, who had always been irreſiſtible, but who ſeemed no ways diſpoſed to fight againſt Antony, their former general. A negociation was, therefore, propoſed; and, by the activity of Cocceius, a friend to both, a reconciliation was effected. All offences and affronts were mutually forgiven; and, to cement the union, a marriage was concluded between Antony and Octavia, the ſiſter of Auguſtus. A new diviſion of the Roman empire was made between them; Auguſtus was to have the command in the Weſt; Antony of the Eaſt; while Lepidus was obliged to content himſelf with the provinces in Africa. As for Sextus Pompeius, he was permitted to retain all the iſlands he had already poſſeſſed, together with Peloponneſus: he was alſo granted the privilege

of demanding the conſulſhip in his abſence, and of diſcharging that office by any of his friends. It was likewiſe ſtipulated to leave the ſea open, and pay the people what corn was due out of Sicily. Thus a general peace was concluded, to the great ſatisfaction of the people, who now expected an end to all their calamities.

This calm ſeemed to continue for ſome time; Antony led his forces againſt the Parthians, over whom his lieutenant, Ventidius, had gained ſome advantages. Auguſtus drew the greateſt part of his army into Gaul, where there were ſome diſturbances; and Pompey went to ſecure his newly-ceded province to his intereſt. It was on this quarter that freſh motives were given for renewing the war. Antony, who was obliged by treaty to quit Peloponneſus, refuſed to evacuate it till Pompey had ſatisfied him for ſuch debts as were due to him from the inhabitants. This, Pompey would by no means comply with, but immediately fitted out a new fleet, and renewed his former enterpriſes, by cutting off ſuch corn and proviſions as were conſigned to Italy. Thus the grievances of the poor were again renewed: and the people began to complain, that, inſtead of three tyrants, they were now oppreſſed by four.

In this exigence Auguſtus, who had long meditated the beſt means of diminiſhing the number, reſolved to begin by getting rid of Pompey, who kept the ſtate in continual alarms. He was maſter of two fleets; one, which he had cauſed to be built at Ravenna; and another which Menodorus, who revolted from Pompey, brought to his aid. His firſt attempt was to invade Sicily; but being overpowered in his paſſage by Pompey, and afterwards ſhattered in a ſtorm, he was obliged to defer his deſigns to the enſuing year. During this interval he was re-enforced by a noble fleet of one hundred and twenty ſhips, given him by Antony, with which he reſolved once more to invade Sicily on three ſeveral quarters. But fortune ſeemed ſtill determined to oppoſe him. He was a ſecond time diſabled and ſhattered by a ſtorm; which ſo raiſed the vanity of Pompey, that he began to ſtyle himſelf the ſon of Neptune. However, Auguſtus was not to be intimidated by any diſgraces; for, having ſhortly refitted his navy, and recruited his forces, he gave the command of both to Agrippa, his faithful friend and aſſociate in war. Agrippa proved himſelf worthy of the truſt repoſed in him; he began his operations by a victory over Pompey; and, though he was ſhortly after worſted himſelf, he ſoon after gave his adverſary a complete and final overthrow. Thus undone, Pompey reſolved to fly

fly to Antony, from whom he expected refuge, as he had formerly obliged that triumvir by giving protection to his mother. However, a gleam of hope offering, he tried, once more, at the head of a ſmall body of men, to make himſelf independent, and even ſurpriſed Antony's lieutenants, who had been ſent to accept of his ſubmiſſions. Nevertheleſs, he was at laſt abandoned by his ſoldiers, and delivered up to Titus, Antony's lieutenant, who ſhortly after cauſed him to be ſlain.

The death of this general removed one very powerful obſtacle to the ambition of Auguſtus, and he reſolved to take the earlieſt opportunity to get rid of the reſt of his aſſociates. An offence was ſoon furniſhed by Lepidus, that ſerved as a ſufficient pretext for depriving him of his ſhare in the triumvirate. Being now at the head of twenty-two legions, with a ſtrong body of cavalry, he idly ſuppoſed that his preſent power was more than an equivalent to the popularity of Auguſtus. He therefore reſolved upon adding Sicily, where he then was, to his province, pretending a right, as having firſt invaded it. Auguſtus ſent to expoſtulate upon theſe proceedings; but Lepidus fiercely replied, "That he was determined to have his ſhare "in the adminiſtration, and would no longer "ſubmit to let one alone poſſeſs all the autho-"rity." Auguſtus was previouſly informed

of the diſpoſition of Lepidus's ſoldiers; for he had, by his ſecret intrigues and largeſſes, entirely attached them to himſelf. Wherefore, without further delay, he, with great boldneſs, went alone to the camp of Lepidus, and with no other aſſiſtance than his private bounties, and the authority he had gained by his former victories, reſolved to depoſe his rival. The ſoldiers thronged round him with the moſt dutiful alacrity, while Lepidus haſtened to prevent their defection. But Auguſtus, though he received a wound from one of the centurions, flew, with great preſence of mind, to the place where the military enſigns were planted, and flouriſhing one of them in the air, all the legionary ſoldiers ran in crowds and ſaluted him as their general. Lepidus, being thus abandoned by his men, diveſted himſelf of all the marks of his authority, which he could no longer keep, and ſubmiſſively threw himſelf at the feet of Auguſtus. This general deſpiſed his colleague too much to take his life; he ſpared it, notwithſtanding the remonſtrances of the army, but deprived him of all his former authority, and baniſhed him to Circæum. There he continued the reſt of his life, deſpiſed by his friends, and to all a melancholy object of blaſted ambition.

Auguſtus was received, upon his return to Rome, with univerſal joy; the ſenators met him

him at the gates, and conducted him to the capitol; the people followed crowned with garlands of flowers; and, after having returned thanks to the gods, waited upon him to his palace. There remained now but one obſtacle to his ambition, which was Antony, whom he reſolved to remove, and for that purpoſe began to render his character as contemptible as he poſſibly could at Rome. In fact, Antony's conduct did not a little contribute to promote the endeavours of his ambitious partner in the ſtate. He had marched againſt the Parthians with a prodigious army, but was forced to return with the loſs of the fourth part of his forces, and all his baggage. This extremely diminiſhed his reputation; but his making a triumphal entry into Alexandria, ſoon after, entirely diſguſted the citizens of Rome. However, Antony ſeemed quite regardleſs of their reſentment: alive only to pleaſure, and totally diſregarding the buſineſs of the ſtate, he ſpent whole days and nights in the company of Cleopatra, who ſtudied every art to increaſe his paſſion, and vary his entertainments. Few women have been ſo much celebrated for the art of giving novelty to pleaſure, and making trifles important: ſtill ingenious in filling up the languid pauſes of ſenſual delight with ſome new ſtroke of refinement, ſhe was at one time a queen; then a bacchanal,

and ſometimes a huntreſs. She invented a ſociety called, The Inimitable; and thoſe of the court, who made the moſt ſumptuous entertainments, carried away the prize. Not contented with ſharing, in her company, all the delights which Egypt could afford, Antony was reſolved to enlarge his ſphere of luxury, by granting her many of thoſe kingdoms which belonged to the Roman empire. He gave her all Phœnicia, Celo-Syria and Cyprus, with a great part of Cilicia, Arabia, and Judea; gifts which he had no right to beſtow, but which he pretended to grant in imitation of Hercules. This complication of vice and folly at laſt totally exaſperated the Romans; and Auguſtus, willing to take the advantage of their reſentment, took care to exaggerate all his defects. At length, when he found the people ſufficiently irritated againſt him, he reſolved to ſend Octavia, who was then at Rome, to Antony, as if with a view of reclaiming her huſband; but, in fact, to furniſh a ſufficient pretext of declaring war againſt him, as he knew ſhe would be diſmiſſed with contempt.

Antony was now at the city of Leucopolis, revelling with his infamous paramour, when he heard that Octavia was at Athens, upon her journey to viſit him. This was very unwelcome news as well to him as to Cleopatra; who, fearing the charms of her rival, endeavoured to convince

convince Antony of the ſtrength of her paſſion by her ſighs, languiſhing looks, and well-feigned melancholy. He frequently caught her in tears, which ſhe ſeemed as if willing to hide; and often entreated her to tell him the cauſe, which ſhe ſeemed willing to ſuppreſs. Theſe artifices, together with the ceaſeleſs flattery and importunity of her creatures, prevailed ſo much upon Antony's weakneſs, that he commanded Octavia to return home without ſeeing her, and attached himſelf ſtill more cloſely to Cleopatra than before. His ridiculous paſſion now began to have no bounds. He reſolved to own her for his wife, and entirely to repudiate Octavia. He accordingly aſſembled the people of Alexandria in the public theatre, where was raiſed an alcove of ſilver, under which were placed two thrones of gold, one for himſelf and the other for Cleopatra. There he ſeated himſelf, dreſſed like Bacchus, while Cleopatra ſate beſide him clothed in the ornaments and attributes of Iſis, the principal deity of the Egyptians. On that occaſion he declared her queen of all the countries which he had already beſtowed upon her; while he aſſociated Cæſario, her ſon by Cæſar, as her partner in the government. To the two children, which he had by her himſelf, he gave the title of King of Kings, with very extenſive dominions; and, to crown his abſurdities, he next ſent a minute account of his

his proceedings to the two conſuls at Rome. One folly is generally the parent of many more. As he became a god, it was now neceſſary to act up to his imaginary dignity; new luxuries and pageantries were therefore ſtudied, and new modes of profuſion found out: no leſs than ſixty thouſand pounds of our money was laviſhed upon one ſingle entertainment: it is ſaid, upon this occaſion, that Cleopatra diſſolved a pearl of great value in vinegar, and drank it off. Yet, however high-wrought their entertainments might be, they wanted that delicacy which gives the fineſt reliſh to all ſenſual happineſs. Antony, as we are told, was but a coarſe and inelegant ſoldier, who miſtook obſcenity for wit, and profuſion for magnificence. Cleopatra, who was naturally more refined, was yet obliged to comply with his diſpoſition, and to bear with his debaucheries, rather than ſhare them. But we are told of one circumſtance that might well repreſs their delights, and teach mankind to reliſh the beverage of virtue, however ſimple, above their moſt zeſted enjoyments. He was ſuſpicious of being poiſoned in every meal; he feared Cleopatra, whom he ſo much loved, and would eat nothing without having it previouſly taſted by one of his attendants.

In the mean time Auguſtus had now a ſufficient pretext for declaring war, and informed the

the ſenate of his intentions. However, he deferred the execution of his deſign for awhile, being then employed in quelling an inſurrection of the Illyrians. The following year was chiefly taken up in preparations againſt Antony, who, perceiving his deſign, remonſtrated to the ſenate, that he had many cauſes of complaint againſt his colleague, who had ſeiſed upon Sicily without affording him a ſhare; alledging that he had alſo diſpoſſeſſed Lepidus, and kept to himſelf the province he had commanded; and that he had divided all Italy among his own ſoldiers, leaving nothing to recompence thoſe in Aſia. To this complaint Auguſtus was contented to make a ſarcaſtic anſwer, implying, That it was abſurd to complain of his diſtribution of a few trifling diſtricts in Italy; when, Antony having conquered Parthia, he might now reward his ſoldiers with cities and provinces. The ſarcaſm upon Antony's misfortunes in Parthia, ſo provoked him, that he ordered Canidius, who commanded his army, to march without delay into Europe; while he and Cleopatra followed to Samos, in order to prepare for carrying on the war with vigour. When arrived there it was ridiculous enough to behold the odd mixture of preparations for pleaſure and for war. On one ſide, all the kings and princes from Egypt to the Euxine ſea had orders to ſend

him thither ſupplies both of men, proviſions, and arms; on the other ſide, all the comedians, dancers, buffoons, and muſicians of Greece, were ordered to attend him. Thus, frequently, when a ſhip was thought to arrive laden with ſoldiers, arms, and ammunition, it was found only filled with players and theatrical machinery. When news was expected of the approach of an army, meſſengers only arrived with tidings of a freſh quantity of veniſon. In this manner he laboured to unite incompatible purſuits; the kings who attended him endeavoured to gain his favour more by their entertainments than their warlike preparations: the provinces ſtrove rather to pleaſe him by ſacrificing to his divinity than by their alacrity in his defence; ſo that ſome were heard to ſay, "What rejoicings would not this man "make for a victory, when he thus triumphs "at the eve of a dangerous war!" In ſhort, his beſt friends now began to forſake his intereſts, which is generally the caſe with all thoſe who firſt forſake themſelves.

His delay at Samos, and afterwards at Athens, where he carried Cleopatra, to receive new honours, was extremely favourable to the arms of Auguſtus. This general was, at firſt, ſcarcely in a diſpoſition to oppoſe him, had he gone into Italy; but he ſoon found time to put himſelf in a condition for carrying on the war; and, ſhortly

ſhortly after, declared it againſt him in form. All Antony's followers were invited over to join him, with great promiſes of rewards; but they were not declared enemies, partly to prevent their growing deſperate, and partly to give a ſhew of moderation to his own party. At length, both ſides found themſelves in readineſs to begin the war, and their armies were ſuitable to the greatneſs of the empire they contended for. The one was followed by all the forces of the Eaſt; the other drew after him all the ſtrength of the Weſt to ſupport his pretenſions. Antony's force compoſed a body of an hundred thouſand foot, and twelve thouſand horſe; while his fleet amounted to five hundred ſhips of war. The army of Auguſtus muſtered but eighty thouſand foot, but equalled his adverſary's in his number of cavalry: his fleet was but half as numerous as Antony's; however, his ſhips were better built, and manned with better ſoldiers. Such forces on both ſides may excite our wonder, but not our intereſt: neither had a good cauſe to ſupport, the contention of both being only like that of two robbers who quarrel in the diviſion of their plunder.

The great deciſive engagement, which was a naval one, was fought near Actium, a city of Epirus, at the entrance of the gulf of Ambracia. Antony ranged his ſhips before the mouth of the gulf; and Auguſtus drew up his fleet in

oppoſition. Neither general aſſumed any fixed ſtation to command in, but went about from ſhip to ſhip, wherever his preſence was neceſſary. In the mean time, the two land armies, on oppoſite ſides of the gulf, were drawn up, only as ſpectators of the engagement; and encouraged the fleets, by their ſhouts, to engage. The battle began, on both ſides, with great ardour; and after a manner not practiſed upon former occaſions. The prows of their veſſels were armed with brazen points; and with theſe they drove furiouſly againſt each other. In this conflict, the ſhips of Antony came with greater force, but thoſe of Auguſtus avoided the ſhock with greater dexterity. On Antony's ſide, the ſterns of the ſhips were raiſed in form of a tower; from whence they threw arrows, from machines for that purpoſe. Thoſe of Auguſtus, made uſe of long poles, hooked with iron, and fire-pots. They fought in this manner for ſome time, with equal animoſity; nor was there any advantage on either ſide, except a ſmall appearance of diſorder in the centre of Antony's fleet. But all of a ſudden, Cleopatra determined the fortune of the day. She was ſeen flying from the engagement, attended by ſixty ſail; ſtruck, perhaps, with the terrors natural to her ſex: but what increaſed the general amazement, was, to behold Antony himſelf following ſoon after, and leaving his

his fleet at the mercy of the conquerors. The engagement, notwithſtanding, continued with great obſtinacy till five in the evening; when Antony's forces, partly conſtrained by the conduct of Agrippa, and partly perſuaded by the promiſes of Auguſtus, ſubmitted to the conqueror. The land forces ſoon after followed the example of the navy; and all yielded to Auguſtus without ſtriking a blow, the fourth day after the battle.

When Cleopatra fled, Antony purſued her in a five-oared galley; and, coming along-ſide of her ſhip, entered it without ſeeing, or being ſeen by her. She was in the ſtern, and he went to the prow, where he remained for ſome time ſilent, holding his head between his hands. In this manner he continued three whole days, during which, either through indignation or ſhame, he neither ſaw nor ſpoke to Cleopatra. At laſt, when they were arrived at the promontory of Tenarus, the queen's female attendants reconciled them, and every thing went on as before. Still, however, he had the conſolation to ſuppoſe his army continued faithful to him, and accordingly diſpatched orders to his lieutenant Canidius, to conduct it into Aſia. However, he was ſoon undeceived when he arrived in Africa, where he was informed of their ſubmiſſion to his rival. This account ſo tranſported him with rage, that he was hardly prevented from

from killing himſelf; but at length, at the entreaty of his friends, he returned to Alexandria, in a very different ſituation from that in which he had left it ſome time before. Cleopatra, however, ſeemed to retain that fortitude in her misfortunes, which had utterly abandoned her admirer. Having amaſſed conſiderable riches, by means of confiſcations, and other acts of violence, ſhe formed a very ſingular and unheard of project; this was to convey her whole fleet over the iſthmus of Suez into the Red Sea, and thereby ſave herſelf in another region, beyond the reach of Rome, with all her treaſures. Some of her veſſels were actually tranſported thither, purſuant to her orders; but the Arabians having burnt them, and Antony diſſuading her from the deſign, ſhe abandoned it for the more improbable ſcheme of defending Egypt againſt the conqueror. She omitted nothing in her power to put this advice in practice, and made all kinds of preparations for war: at leaſt hoping thereby to obtain better terms from Auguſtus. In fact, ſhe had always loved Antony's fortunes rather than his perſon; and if ſhe could have fallen upon any method of ſaving herſelf, though even at his expence, there is no doubt but ſhe would have embraced it with gladneſs. She even ſtill had ſome hopes from the power of her charms, though ſhe was arrived almoſt at the age of forty;

forty; and was desirous of trying upon Augustus those arts which had been so successful with the greatest men of Rome. Thus, in three embassies which were sent one after another, from Antony to Augustus in Asia, the queen had always her secret agents, charged with particular proposals in her name. Antony desired no more than that his life might be spared, and to have the liberty of passing the remainder of his days in obscurity. To these proposals Augustus made no reply. Cleopatra sent him also public proposals in favour of her children; but at the same time privately resigned him her crown, with all the ensigns of royalty. To the queen's public proposal, no answer was given; to her private offer he replied, by giving her assurances of his favour, in case she sent away Antony or put him to death. These negociations were not so private but they came to the knowledge of Antony, whose jealousy and rage every occurrence now contributed to heighten. He built a small solitary house upon a mole in the sea, and there shut himself up, a prey to all those passions that are the tormentors of unsuccessful tyranny. There he passed his time, shunning all commerce with mankind, and professing to imitate Timon the man-hater. However, his furious jealousy drove him even from this retreat into society; for hearing that Cleopatra had many secret conferences with one

Thyrſus, an emiſſary from Auguſtus, he ſeiſed upon him, and having ordered him to be cruelly ſcourged, ſent him back to his patron. At the ſame time he ſent letters by him, importing that he had chaſtiſed Thyrſus for inſulting a man in misfortunes; but withal he gave Auguſtus permiſſion to avenge himſelf, by ſcourging Hiparchus, Antony's freedman, in the ſame manner. The revenge, in this caſe, would have been highly pleaſing to Antony, as Hiparchus had left him, to join the fortunes of his ſucceſsful rival.

Mean while, the operations of the war were carried vigorouſly forward, and Egypt was once more the theatre of the contending armies of Rome. Gallus, the lieutenant of Auguſtus, took Paretonium, which opened the whole country to his incurſions. On the other ſide, Antony, who had ſtill conſiderable forces by ſea and land, wanted to take that important place from the enemy. He therefore marched towards it, flattering himſelf, that as ſoon as he ſhould ſhow himſelf to the legions which he had once commanded, the affection for their ancient general would revive. He approached, therefore, and exhorted them to remember their former vows of fidelity. Gallus, however, ordered all the trumpets to ſound, in order to hinder Antony from being heard; ſo that he was obliged to retire.

Auguſtus himſelf was in the mean time advancing with another army before Peluſium, which, by its ſtrong ſituation, might have retarded his progreſs for ſome time. But the governor of the city, either wanting courage to defend it, or previouſly inſtructed by Cleopatra to give it up, permitted him to take poſſeſſion of the place; ſo that Auguſtus had now no obſtacle in his way to Alexandria, whither he marched with all expedition. Antony, upon his arrival, ſallied out to oppoſe him, fighting with great deſperation, and putting the enemy's cavalry to flight. This ſlight advantage once more revived his declining hopes; and, being naturally vain, he re-entered Alexandria in triumph. Then going, all armed as he was, to the palace, he embraced Cleopatra, and preſented her a ſoldier who had diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the late engagement. The queen rewarded him very magnificently; preſenting him with an head-piece and breaſt-plate of gold. With theſe, however, the ſoldier went off the next night to the other army; prudently reſolving to ſecure his riches, by keeping on the ſtrongeſt ſide. Antony could not bear this defection without freſh indignation; he reſolved, therefore, to make a bold expiring effort by ſea and land, but previouſly offered to fight his adverſary in ſingle combat. Auguſtus too well knew the inequality of their ſituations, to comply with this forlorn

offer; he only, therefore, coolly replyed, That Antony had ways enough to die beſides ſingle combat.

The evening before the day appointed for his laſt deſperate attempt, he ordered a grand entertainment to be prepared. "Give me good "wine, and good chear (cried he to his friends) "let me live to-day; to-morrow, perhaps, you "may ſerve another maſter." About midnight, as Plutarch relates, while a melancholy ſilence reigned throughout the city, a noiſe of voices, inſtruments, and dancing, was heard, as if paſſing through the town, and ſeeming to go out at the gate which looked towards the enemy. At day-break, Antony poſted the few troops he had remaining, upon a riſing ground near the city; from whence he ſent orders to his gallies to engage the enemy. There he waited to be a ſpectator of the combat; and at firſt he had the ſatisfaction to ſee them advance in good order; but his joy was ſoon turned into rage, when he ſaw his ſhips only ſaluting thoſe of Auguſtus, and both fleets uniting together, and ſailing back into the harbour. At the very ſame time, his cavalry deſerted him; he tried, however, to lead on his infantry, which were eaſily vanquiſhed; and he himſelf compelled to return into the town. His anger was now ungovernable; he could not help crying out aloud as he paſſed, that he was betrayed by

by Cleopatra, and delivered by her to thoſe who, for her ſake alone, were his enemies. In theſe ſuſpicions he was not deceived, for it was by ſecret orders from the queen that the fleet had paſſed over to the enemy.

Cleopatra had, for a long while, dreaded the effects of Antony's jealouſy; and had, ſome time before, prepared a method of obviating any ſudden ſallies it might produce. Near the temple of Iſis ſhe erected a building, which was ſeemingly deſigned for a ſepulchre. Hither ſhe removed all her treaſure, and moſt valuable effects, covering them over with torches, faggots, and other combuſtible matter. This ſepulchre ſhe deſigned to anſwer a double purpoſe; as well to ſcreen her from the ſudden reſentments of Antony, as to make Auguſtus believe that ſhe would burn all her treaſures, in caſe he refuſed her proper terms of capitulation. Here, therefore, ſhe retired from Antony's preſent fury; ſhutting the gates, which were fortified with bolts and bars of iron: but in the mean time, gave orders, that a report ſhould be ſpread of her death. This news, which ſoon reached Antony, recalled all his former love and tenderneſs. This poor wretch was now a being ſubject to the guſt of every paſſion, and each of them in extreme. He lamented her death with the ſame violence he had but a few minutes before ſeemed to deſire it.

" Wretched man, (cried he to himſelf) what " is there now worth living for; ſince all that " could ſooth or ſoften my cares is departed! " O Cleopatra, (continued he, being got to his " chamber) our ſeparation does not ſo much " afflict me, as the diſgrace I ſuffer, in permit- " ting a woman to inſtruct me in the ways of " dying." He then called to one of his freedmen, named Eros, whom he had engaged by oath to kill him, whenever fortune ſhould drive him to this laſt reſource. Eros being commanded to perform his promiſe, this faithful follower drew the ſword, as if going to execute his orders; but turning his face, plunged it into his own boſom, and died at his maſter's feet. Antony, for awhile hung over his faithful ſervant, and, commending his fidelity, took up the ſword, with which, ſtabbing himſelf in the belly, he fell backward upon a little couch.

Though the wound was mortal, yet the blood ſtopping, he recovered his ſpirits, and earneſtly conjured thoſe who were come into the room, to put an end to his life; but they all fled, being ſeiſed with fright and horror. He therefore continued in this manner for ſome time, ſtill crying out and writhing with pain, till he was informed by one of the queen's ſecretaries that his miſtreſs was ſtill alive. He then earneſtly deſired to be carried to the place where ſhe was. They accordingly brought him to the gate of

the ſepulchre; but Cleopatra, who would not permit it to be opened, appeared at the window, and threw down cords in order to pull him up. In this manner, aſſiſted by her two female attendants, ſhe raiſed him all bloody from the ground; and while yet ſuſpended in the air, he continued ſtretching out his hands to encourage her. Cleopatra and her maids had only juſt ſtrength ſufficient to raiſe him; and at laſt with much ſtraining, they effected their purpoſe, and carried him to a couch, on which they gently laid him. There ſhe gave way to her ſorrow, tearing her clothes, beating her breaſt, and kiſſing the wound of which he was dying. She called upon him as her lord, her huſband, her emperor, and ſeemed to have forgotten her own diſtreſſes in the greatneſs of his ſufferings. Antony entreated her to moderate the tranſports of her grief, and aſked for ſome wine, either becauſe he was thirſty, or becauſe he thought it would haſten his end: after he had drank he entreated Cleopatra to endeavour to preſerve her life, if ſhe could do it with honour; and recommended Proculeius, a friend of Auguſtus, as one ſhe might rely on to be her interceſſor. He exhorted her not to lament for his misfortunes, but to congratulate him upon his former felicity; to conſider him as one who had lived the moſt powerful of men, and at laſt died by the hand of a Roman.

Juſt as he had done ſpeaking he expired, and Proculeius made his appearance by command of Auguſtus, who had been informed of Antony's deſperate conduct. He was ſent to try all means of getting Cleopatra into his power. Auguſtus had a double motive for his ſolicitude on this occaſion: one was to prevent her deſtroying the treaſures ſhe had taken with her into the tomb; and the other to preſerve her perſon as an ornament to grace his triumph. Cleopatra, however, was upon her guard, and would not confer with Proculeius, except through the gate, which was very well ſecured. In the mean time, while he deſignedly drew out the conference to ſome length, and had given Gallus, one of his fellow-ſoldiers, directions to carry on the converſation in his abſence, he entered with two more by the window at which Antony had been drawn up. As ſoon as he entered he ran down to the gate; and one of the women crying out, that they were taken alive, Cleopatra, perceiving what had happened, drew a poniard, and attempted to ſtab herſelf; but Proculeius preventing the blow, gently remonſtrated, that ſhe was cruel in refuſing ſo good a prince as his maſter was, the pleaſure of diſplaying his clemency. He then forced the poniard out of her hand, and examined her clothes, to be certain ſhe had no poiſon about her. Thus leav-

ing every thing ſecured, he went to acquaint his maſter with his proceedings.

Auguſtus was extremely pleaſed at finding her in his power: he ſent Epaphroditus to bring her to his palace and to watch her with the utmoſt circumſpection. He was likewiſe ordered to uſe her in every reſpect, with that deference and ſubmiſſion which was due to her rank; and to do every thing in his power to render her captivity agreeable. She was permitted to have the honour of granting Antony the rites of burial: and furniſhed with every thing ſhe deſired, that was becoming his dignity to receive, or her love to offer. Yet, ſtill ſhe languiſhed under her new confinement: her exceſſive ſorrow, her many loſſes, and the blows ſhe had given her boſom, produced a fever, which ſhe ſeemed willing to increaſe. She reſolved to abſtain from taking any nouriſhment, under the pretence of a regimen neceſſary for her diſorder; but Auguſtus, being made acquainted with the real motive, by her phyſician, began to threaten her, with regard to her children, in caſe ſhe perſiſted. This was the only puniſhment that could now affect her; ſhe allowed herſelf to be treated as they thought proper, and received whatever was preſcribed for her recovery.

In the mean time, Auguſtus made his entry into Alexandria; taking care to mitigate the fears

fears of the inhabitants, by converſing familiarly as he went along, with Areus, a philoſopher, and a native of the place. The citizens, however, trembled at his approach; and when he placed himſelf upon the tribunal, they proſtrated themſelves, with their faces to the ground, before him, like criminals who waited the ſentence of their execution. Auguſtus preſently ordered them to riſe, telling them, that three motives induced him to pardon them. His reſpect for Alexander, who was the founder of their city; his admiration of its beauty; and his friendſhip for Areus their fellow-citizen. Two only of particular note were put to death upon this occaſion; Antony's eldeſt ſon Antyllus, and Cæſario, the ſon of Julius Cæſar, both betrayed into his hands by their reſpective tutors, who themſelves ſuffered for their perfidy ſhortly after. As for the reſt of Cleopatra's children, he treated them with great gentleneſs, leaving them to the care of thoſe who were intruſted with their education, who had orders to provide them with every thing ſuitable to their birth. As for her, when ſhe was recovered from her late indiſpoſition, he came to viſit her in perſon; ſhe received him lying on a couch, in a careleſs manner; and, upon his entering the apartment, roſe up to proſtrate herſelf before him. She was dreſſed in nothing but a looſe robe. Her misfortunes had given an air of ſeverity to her features;

features; her hair was diſhevelled, her voice trembling, her complexion pale, and her eyes red with weeping. Yet, ſtill her natural beauty ſeemed to gleam through the diſtreſſes that ſurrounded her; and the graces of her motion, and the alluring ſoftneſs of her looks, ſtill bore teſtimony to the former power of her charms. Auguſtus raiſed her with his uſual complaiſance, and deſiring her to ſit, placed himſelf beſide her. Cleopatra had been prepared for this interview, and made uſe of every method ſhe could think of, to propitiate the conqueror. She tried apologies, entreaties, and allurements, to obtain his favour, and ſoften his reſentment. She began by attempting to juſtify her conduct; but when her art and ſkill failed againſt manifeſt proofs, ſhe turned her defence into ſupplications. She talked of Cæſar's humanity to thoſe in diſtreſs; ſhe read ſome of his letters to her, full of tenderneſs, and enlarged upon the long intimacy that had paſſed between them. "But "of what ſervice (cried ſhe) are now all his "benefits to me! Why could I not die with "him! Yet he ſtill lives, methinks I ſee him "ſtill before me, he revives in you."

Auguſtus was no ſtranger to this method of addreſs, but he remained firm againſt all attacks, anſwering always with a cold indifference, which obliged her to give her attempts a different turn. She now addreſſed his avarice, preſenting

ſenting him with an inventory of her treaſure and jewels. This gave occaſion to a very ſingular ſcene, which ſhows that the little decorums of breeding were then, by no means, ſo carefully attended to as at preſent. One of her ſtewards having alledged that the inventory was defective, and that ſhe had ſecreted a part of her effects, ſhe fell into a violent paſſion, ſtarted from her couch, and catching him by the hair, gave him ſeveral blows on the face. Auguſtus ſmiled at her indignation, and leading her to the couch, deſired her to be pacified. To this ſhe replied, that ſhe could not bear being inſulted in the preſence of one whom ſhe ſo highly eſteemed. "And ſuppoſing, "(cried ſhe) that I have ſecreted a few trifles "am I to blame, when they are reſerved not "for myſelf but for Livia and Octavia, whom "I hope to make my interceſſors with you?" This excuſe, which intimated a deſire of living, was not diſagreeable to Auguſtus, who politely aſſured her, that ſhe was at liberty to keep whatever ſhe had reſerved, and that in every thing ſhe ſhould be indulged to the height of her expectations. He then took leave and departed; imagining he had reconciled her to life, and to the indignity of being ſhown in the intended triumph, which he was preparing for his return to Rome: but in this he was deceived. Cleopatra, all this time, had

had kept a correſpondence with Dolabella, a young Roman of high birth, in the camp of Auguſtus; who, perhaps from compaſſion, or ſtronger motives, was intereſted in the misfortunes of that princeſs. From him ſhe learnt the intentions of Auguſtus, and that he was determined to ſend her off in three days, together with her children, to Rome. She now therefore, determined upon dying; but previouſly entreated permiſſion to pay her laſt oblations at Antony's tomb. This requeſt being granted her, ſhe was carried, with her two female attendants, to the ſtately monument where he was laid. There ſhe threw herſelf upon his coffin, bewailed her captivity, and renewed her proteſtations not to ſurvive him. She then crowned the tomb with garlands of flowers; and having kiſſed the coffin a thouſand times, ſhe returned home, to execute her fatal reſolution. Having bathed, and ordered a ſumptuous banquet, ſhe attired herſelf in the moſt ſplendid manner. She then feaſted as uſual; and ſoon after ordered all but her two attendants, Charmion and Iris, to leave the room. Then, having previouſly ordered an aſp to be ſecretly conveyed to her in a baſket of fruit, ſhe ſent a letter to Auguſtus, informing him of her fatal purpoſe, and deſiring to be buried in the ſame tomb with Antony. Auguſtus, upon receiving this letter, inſtantly diſpatched meſ-

ſengers

ſengers to ſtop her intentions; but they arrived too late. Upon entering the chamber, they beheld Cleopatra lying dead upon a gilded couch, arrayed in her royal robes. Near her, Iris, one of her faithful attendants, was ſtretched lifeleſs at the feet of her miſtreſs; and Charmion herſelf, almoſt expiring, was ſettling the diadem upon Cleopatra's head. "Alas (cried one of "the meſſengers) was this well done, Char-"mion? Yes, (replied ſhe) it is well done; "ſuch a death becomes a queen, deſcended "from a race of glorious anceſtors." On pronouncing theſe words, ſhe fell down, and died with her much-loved miſtreſs. There are ſome circumſtances in the death of this celebrated woman that intereſt our affections, contrary to the dictates of our reaſon. Though with ſcarce any valuable talent but that of cunning, and ſcarce any other ornament but that of beauty, yet we pity her fate, and ſympathiſe with her diſtreſſes. She died at the age of thirty-nine, after having reigned twenty-two years. Her death put an end to the monarchy in Egypt, which had flouriſhed there for immemorial ages.

Auguſtus ſeemed much troubled at Cleopatra's death, as it deprived him of a principal ornament in his intended triumph. However, the manner of it, a good deal exalted her character among the Romans, with whom ſuicide

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was conſidered as a virtue. Her dying requeſt was complied with, her body being laid by Antony's, and a magnificent funeral prepared for her and her two faithful attendants. By the death of Antony, Auguſtus was now become complete maſter of the Roman Empire. He ſoon after returned to Rome in triumph; where, by ſumptuous feaſts, and magnificent ſhows he began to obliterate the impreſſions of his former cruelty; and from thence forward reſolved to ſecure by his clemency, a throne, the foundations of which were laid in blood. He was now at the head of the moſt extenſive empire that mankind had ever beheld. The former ſpirit of the Romans, and thoſe characteriſtic marks that diſtinguiſhed them from others, were totally loſt. The city was now inhabited by a concourſe from all the countries of the world; and being conſequently diveſted of all juſt patriotick principles, perhaps a monarchy was the beſt form of government that could be found to unite its members. However, it is very remarkable, that during theſe long contentions among themſelves, and theſe horrid devaſtations by civil war, the ſtate was daily growing more formidable and powerful, and completed the deſtruction of all the kings who preſumed to oppoſe it. A modern politician*, pretends to prove upon principle, that

* Monteſquieu.

that this muſt be the caſe in every ſtate long haraſſed by civil war. "In ſuch a ſeaſon (ſays "he) the nobility, the citizens, the artizans, "the peaſants, in ſhort, the whole body of the "people, become ſoldiers; and when peace "has united all the contending parties, this "ſtate enjoys great advantages over others, "whoſe ſubjects are generally citizens. Be-"ſides civil wars always produce great men; "as then is the ſeaſon when merit is ſought "for, and talents become conſpicuous." However this may be, there never was a time when Rome was ſo magnificent, ſo populous, and ſo refined. The empire was now brought very near its utmoſt extent. It contained in Europe—Italy, Gaul, Spain, Greece, Illyricum, Dacia, Pannonia, Britain, and ſome part of Germany. In Aſia, all thoſe provinces which went under the name of Aſia Minor; together with Armenia, Syria, Judæa, Meſopotamia and Media. In Africa, almoſt all thoſe parts of it which were then ſuppoſed habitable; namely, Egypt, Numidia, Mauritania, and Lybia; the whole of their empire compriſing an extent of between three and four thouſand miles in length, and half as much in breadth. As to the yearly revenues of the empire, they have been computed to be about forty millions of our money. The number of the citizens amounted to four millions and ſixty-

three

three thouſand men, women, and children; a number, at leaſt, four times greater than that of London, at preſent the moſt populous city in the world. As to the improvements in polite learning, they exceeded all that preceded them, and have never ſince been equalled. Beſides Virgil, Horace, and Ovid, poets whoſe names it is ſufficient to mention, Livy, the hiſtorian, graced this period; a writer whoſe works are as much ſuperior to thoſe of any other hiſtorian, as the actions he undertook to record were greater. In whatever view his books might be conſidered, whether in point of accuracy, eloquence, or vigour of imagination, he has ſet mankind a model of the grandeſt ſubject, treated in the moſt becoming manner.

CHAP. III.

From the Death of Antony to the Death of Auguſtus.

U. C. 725. THE government having now taken a permanent form, it is not to be ſuppoſed that hiſtory can teem with ſuch ſtriking events, as during that period in which the conſtitution was ſtruggling for freedom. But a dearth of hiſtorical occurrences is generally the happineſs of the people. In fact, Rome never enjoyed an interval of ſo much proſperity as during the continuance of the reign of Auguſtus. From the moment he wanted a rival, he gave up his cruelty; and being entirely without an oppoſer, he ſeemed totally diveſted of ſuſpicion. His firſt care was to aſſure himſelf of the friends of Antony; to which end he publickly reported that he had burnt all Antony's letters and papers without reading, convinced that while any thought themſelves ſuſpected, they would be fearful of even offering him their friendſhip. His next ſtroke of policy was to eſtabliſh order, or rather permanent ſervitude; for, when once the ſovereignty is uſurped in a free ſtate, every tranſaction on

which an unlimited authority can be founded is called a regulation; however, as the greateſt number of thoſe who raiſe their fortunes, aſſume new titles to authoriſe their power, Auguſtus reſolved to conceal his new power, under uſual names and ordinary dignities. He cauſed himſelf to be ſtyled Emperor, to preſerve authority over the army; he made himſelf to be created Tribune, to manage the people; and Prince of the ſenate, to govern there. Thus uniting in his own perſon ſo many different powers, he charged himſelf alſo with the cares belonging to each ſeparate department; and while he did the greateſt good to others, fully gratified his ambition in the diſcharge of his duty. In this manner the people's intereſts and his ambition ſeemed to co-operate, and while he governed all, he let them imagine that they were governing themſelves.

For this purpoſe, as he had gained the empire by his army, he reſolved to govern it by the ſenate. This body, though greatly fallen from their ancient ſplendour, he knew to be the beſt ordered, and moſt capable of wiſdom and juſtice. To theſe, therefore, he gave the chief power in the adminiſtration of his government, while he ſtill kept the people and the army ſtedfaſt to him by donatives, and acts of favour. By theſe means all the odium of juſtice fell upon the ſenate, and all the popularity of pardon

was ſolely his own. Thus reſtoring to the ſenate their ancient ſplendour, and diſcountenancing all corruption, he pretended to reſerve to himſelf a very moderate ſhare of authority, which none could refuſe him: namely, an abſolute power to compel all ranks of the ſtate to do their duty. This, in fact, was reſerving abſolute dominion in his own hands: but, the miſguided people began to look upon his moderation with aſtoniſhment: they conſidered themſelves as reſtored to their former freedom, except in the capacity of promoting ſedition; and the ſenate ſuppoſed their power re-eſtabliſhed in all things but their tendency to injuſtice. It was even ſaid that the Romans, by ſuch a government, loſt nothing of the happineſs that liberty could produce; and were exempt from all the misfortunes it could occaſion. This obſervation might have ſome truth under ſuch a monarch as Auguſtus now appeared to be; but they were taught to change their ſentiments under his ſucceſſors, when they found themſelves afflicted with all the puniſhments that tyranny could inflict, or ſedition make neceſſary.

After having eſtabliſhed this admirable order, Auguſtus found himſelf agitated by different paſſions; and conſidered a long time whether he ſhould keep the empire or reſtore the people to their ancient liberty.

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The examples of Sylla and Cæſar variouſly operated upon him. He conſidered that Sylla, who had voluntarily quitted the dictatorſhip, died peaceably in the midſt of his enemies; and Cæſar, who had kept it, was aſſaſſinated by his moſt intimate friends, who gloried in the action. Struggling with this troubleſome uncertainty, he diſcovered the diſorder of his mind to his two principal friends, Agrippa and Mecænas. Agrippa, who had gained him the empire by his valour, adviſed him to reſign it; either impelled by patriotiſm, or a deſire to ſeiſe upon what ſhould be thus laid down. Mecænas, however, was of a contrary opinion. This miniſter, ſo famous for patronizing the men of genius of his time, had much merit, but was effeminate and tender. More an admirer of the uſeful than the ſplendid virtues, he was better ſatisfied with what benefited the people than raiſed their admiration; beſides, he might have been influenced by ſelf-intereſted motives in the advice he gave; for being more capable of adviſing than of acting, and entirely formed for the cabinet, he hoped to obtain thoſe honours from a maſter which he could not force from the people, with whom he muſt have raiſed himſelf by his own proper powers, and acted with vigorous independence. He, therefore, intreated Auguſtus to conſider rather what was advantageous to his country

than alluring to himſelf; he likened the republick to a ſhip fraught with paſſengers, but totally deſtitute of a pilot: he conſidered it as now grown almoſt a wreck, though ſafely brought into harbour, and in the utmoſt danger of ſinking, if once more puſhed off from ſhore. He deſcribed the empire as too great and unwieldy to ſubſiſt without the moſt vigorous maſter, and likely to fall into pieces under a variety of rulers. To theſe he added a diſſuaſive, perhaps ſtill more prevailing; namely, the ſafety of the emperor, which nothing but his preſent authority could ſecure. Theſe reaſons prevailed upon a mind already too well inclined to preſerve that power which it had ſo hardly laboured to obtain. From that time Auguſtus adopted the advice of Mecænas, not only in this inſtance, but on every other occaſion. By the inſtructions of that great miniſter, he became gentle, affable, and humane. By his advice it was, that he formed a reſolution of never being concerned at what was ſaid againſt him. However, in order to avoid obloquy as much as poſſible, he encouraged men of learning, and gave them much of his time and his friendſhip. They in their turn relieved his moſt anxious hours, and circulated his praiſe through the empire.

Thus having given peace and happineſs to the empire, and being convinced of the attachment

ment of all the orders of the ſtate to his perſon, he reſolved upon impreſſing the people with an idea of his magnanimity alſo. This was nothing leſs than making a ſhow of reſigning his authority; wherefore, having previouſly inſtructed his creatures in the ſenate how to act, he addreſſed them in a ſtudied ſpeech, importing the difficulty of governing ſo extenſive an empire; a taſk, which, he ſaid, none but the immortal Gods were equal to. He modeſtly urged his own inability, though impelled by every motive to undertake it; and then, with a degree of ſeeming generoſity, freely gave up all that power, which, as he obſerved, his arms had gained, and the ſenate had confirmed. This power he repeatedly offered to reſtore, giving them to underſtand that the true ſpirit of the Romans was not loſt in him. This ſpeech operated upon the ſenate variouſly, as they were more or leſs in the ſecret; many believed the ſincerity of his profeſſions, and, therefore, regarded his conduct as an act of heroiſm unequalled by any thing that had hitherto appeared in Rome; others, equally ignorant of his motives, diſtruſted his deſigns. Some there were, who, having greatly ſuffered during the late popular commotions, were fearful of having them renewed; but the majority, who were entirely devoted to his intereſts, and inſtructed by his miniſters, fre-

quently attempted to interrupt him while ſpeaking, and received his propoſal with pretended indignation. Theſe unanimouſly beſought him not to reſign the adminiſtration; but upon his continuing to decline their requeſt, they in a manner compelled him to comply. However, that his perſon might be in greater ſecurity, they immediately decreed the pay of his guard to be doubled. On the other hand, that he might ſeem to make ſome conceſſions on his ſide, he permitted the ſenate to govern the weak internal provinces of the empire, while the moſt powerful provinces, and thoſe that required the greateſt armies for their defence, were taken entirely under his own command. Over theſe he aſſumed the government but for ten years, leaving the people ſtill in hopes of regaining their ancient freedom; but, at the ſame time, taking his meaſures ſo well, that his government was renewed every ten years to his death.

This ſhow of a reſignation only ſerved to confirm him in the empire and the hearts of the people. New honours were heaped upon him. He was then firſt called Auguſtus; a name I have hitherto uſed as that by which he is beſt known in hiſtory. A laurel was ordered to be planted at his gates. His houſe was called the palace, to diſtinguiſh it from that of ordinary citizens. He was confirmed in the

title of father of his country, and his perſon declared ſacred and inviolable. In ſhort, flattery ſeemed on the rack to find out new modes of pleaſing him; but though he deſpiſed the arts of the ſenate, he permitted their homage, well knowing that, among mankind, titles produce a reſpect which enforces authority.

Upon entering into his tenth conſulſhip, the ſenate, by oath, approved of all his acts, and ſet him wholly above the power of the laws. They ſome time after offered to ſwear to the obſervance of not only all the laws he had made, but ſuch as he ſhould make for the future. It was then cuſtomary with fathers upon their death-beds to command their children to carry oblations to the capitol, with this inſcription, That at the day of their deaths they left Auguſtus in health. It was determined that no man ſhould be put to death on ſuch days as the emperor entered the city. Upon a dearth of proviſions, the people in a body entreated him to accept of the dictatorſhip; but, though he undertook to be procurator of the proviſions, he would by no means accept of the title of dictator, which had been aboliſhed by a law made when Antony was conſul.

This accumulation of titles and employments, did not in the leaſt diminiſh his aſſiduity in filling the duties of each. Several very wholeſome edicts were paſſed by his command, tending

tending to ſuppreſs corruption in the ſenate, and licentiouſneſs in the people. He ordained that none ſhould exhibit a ſhow of gladiators without orders from the ſenate, and then no oftener than twice a year; nor with more than an hundred and twenty at a time. This law was extremely neceſſary at ſo corrupt a period of the empire; when whole armies of theſe unfortunate men were brought at once upon the ſtage, and compelled to fight, often till half of them were ſlain. It had been uſual alſo with the knights, and ſome women of the firſt diſtinction, to exhibit themſelves as dancers upon the theatre; he ordered that not only they, but their children and grand-children, ſhould be reſtrained from ſuch exerciſes for the future. He fined many who had refuſed to marry at a certain age; and rewarded ſuch as had many children. He ordained that virgins ſhould not be married till twelve years of age; and permitted any perſon to kill an adulterer taken in the fact. He enacted that the ſenators ſhould be always held in great reverence; adding to their authority what he had taken from their power. He made a law that no man ſhould have the freedom of the city without a previous examination into his merit and character. He appointed new rules and limits to the manumiſſion of ſlaves; and was himſelf very ſtrict in the obſervance of them. With regard to players,

players, of whom he was very fond, he ſeverely examined their morals, not allowing the leaſt licentiouſneſs in their lives, nor indecency in their actions. Though he encouraged the athletic exerciſes, yet he would not permit women to be preſent at them; holding it unbecoming the modeſty of the ſex, to be ſpectators of theſe ſports, which were performed by naked men. In order to prevent bribery in ſuing for offices, he took conſiderable ſums of money from the candidates, by way of pledge; and if any indirect practices were proved againſt them, they were obliged to forfeit all. Slaves had been hitherto diſallowed to confeſs any thing againſt their own maſters; but he aboliſhed the practice, and firſt ſold the ſlave to another; which, altering the property, his examination became free. Theſe, and many other laws, all tending to extirpate vice, or deter from crimes, gave the manners of the people another complexion; ſo that the rough character of the Roman was now ſoftened into that of the refined citizen.

Indeed his own example a good deal tended to humanize his fellow-citizens; for being placed above all equality, he had nothing to fear from condeſcenſion; wherefore he was familiar with all, and ſuffered himſelf to be reprimanded with the moſt patient humility. Though he was, by the ſingle authority of his ſtation,

ſtation, capable of condemning, or acquitting whomſoever he thought proper, yet he gave the laws their proper courſe; and even ſometimes pleaded for thoſe he deſired to protect. Thus Primus, the governor of Macedonia, having a day aſſigned him for having made war upon the Odriſſii, a neighbouring ſtate, as he ſaid, by the command of Auguſtus, the latter denied the charge. Upon which the advocate for Primus deſired to know, with an inſolent air, What brought Auguſtus into court or who had ſent for him? To this the emperor ſubmiſſively replied, "The commonwealth;" an anſwer which greatly pleaſed the people. Upon another occaſion, one of his veteran ſoldiers entreated his protection in a certain cauſe; but Auguſtus taking little notice of his requeſt, deſired him to apply to an advocate. "Ah! "(replied the ſoldier) it was not by proxy that "I ſerved you at the battle of Actium." This reply pleaſed Auguſtus ſo much, that he pleaded his cauſe in perſon, and gained it for him. He was extremely affable, and returned the ſalutations of the meaneſt perſon. One day a perſon preſented him a petition, but with ſo much awe, that Auguſtus was diſpleaſed with his meanneſs. "What, friend, (cried he) "you ſeem as if you were offering ſomething "to an elephant, and not to a man; be bolder." One day, as he was ſitting on the tribunal,

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in judgement, Mecænas perceiving by his temper that he was inclined to be ſevere, attempted to ſpeak to him; but not being able to get up to the tribunal, for the crowd, he threw a paper into his lap, on which was written, "Ariſe, executioner." Auguſtus read it, without any diſpleaſure, and immediately riſing, pardoned thoſe whom he was diſpoſed to condemn. But what moſt of all ſhowed a total alteration in his diſpoſition, was his treatment of Cornelius Cinna, Pompey's grandſon. This nobleman had entered into a very dangerous conſpiracy againſt him; but the plot was diſcovered before it was ripe for execution. Auguſtus, for ſome time, debated with himſelf how to act; but at laſt, his clemency prevailed; he therefore ſent for thoſe who were guilty, and after reprimanding them, diſmiſſed them all. But he was reſolved to mortify Cinna by the greatneſs of his generoſity: for addreſſing him in particular, "I have twice (ſays he) given "you your life; firſt, as an enemy; now, as a "conſpirator; I now give you the conſulſhip; "let us, therefore, be friends for the future: "and let us only contend in ſhowing, whether "my confidence, or your fidelity, ſhall be "victorious." This generoſity, which the emperor very happily timed, had ſo good an effect, that from that inſtant, all conſpiracies ceaſed againſt him.

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In the practice of ſuch virtues as theſe he paſſed a long reign of above forty years, in which the happineſs of the people ſeemed to conſpire with his own: not but that there were wars in the diſtant provinces of the empire, during almoſt the whole reign; but they were rather the quelling of inſurrections, than the extending of dominions; for he had made it a rule to carry on no operations in which ambition, and not the ſafety of the ſtate, was concerned. In fact, he ſeemed the firſt Roman, who aimed at gaining a character by the arts of peace alone; and who obtained the affections of the ſoldiers, without any military talents of his own. Nevertheleſs, the Roman arms, under his lieutenants, were crowned with ſucceſs. The Cantabrians in Spain, who had revolted, were more than once quelled by Tiberius, his ſtep-ſon, Agrippa, his ſon-in-law, and Ælius Lama; who followed them to their inacceſſible mountains, there blocked them up, and compelled them, by famine, to ſurrender at diſcretion. The Germans alſo gave ſome uneaſineſs, by their repeated excurſions into the territories of Gaul, but were repreſſed by Lollius. The Rhetians were conquered by Druſus the brother of Tiberius. The Beſſi and Silatæ, barbarous nations, making an irruption into Thrace, were overthrown by Piſo, governor of Pamphylia, who gained triumphal honours.

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The Dacians were repreſſed with more than one defeat: the Armenians alſo were brought into due ſubjection by Caius, his grandſon. The Getulians, in Africa, took up arms; but were ſubdued by the conſul, Caius Coſſus, who thence received the ſurname of Getulicus. A dangerous war alſo was carried on againſt the Dalmatians and Pannonians: who having acquired great ſtrength, by the continuance of a long peace, gathered an army of two hundred thouſand foot, and nine thouſand horſe, threatening Rome itſelf with deſtruction. Levies were therefore made in Italy with the utmoſt expedition; the veteran troops were recalled from all parts; and Auguſtus went to Arminium, for the greater convenience of giving his directions. And, indeed, though perſonal valour was by no means his moſt ſhining ornament, yet no man could give wiſer orders upon every emergency; or go with greater diſpatch into all parts of his dominions, than he. This war continued near three years; being principally managed by Tiberius and Germanicus; the latter of whom gained great reputation againſt theſe fierce and barbarous multitudes. Upon their reduction, Bato, their leader, being ſummoned before the tribunal of Tiberius, and being demanded how he could offer to revolt againſt the power of Rome, the bold barbarian replied, "That the Romans,

"and

U. C. 752. " and not he, were the aggreſſors; ſince they " had ſent, inſtead of dogs and ſhepherds, to " ſecure their flocks, only wolves and bears " to devour them." But the war which was moſt fatal to the Roman intereſts, during this reign, was that which was managed by Quintilius Varus. This general invading the territories of the Germans, was induced to follow the enemy among their foreſts and marſhes, with his army in ſeparate bodies: there he was attacked by night, and entirely cut off, with his whole army. Theſe were the beſt and choiceſt legions of the whole empire, either for valour, diſcipline, or experience. The affliction, from this defeat, ſeemed to ſink very deep upon the mind of Auguſtus. He was often heard to cry out, in a tone of anguiſh, " Quin- " tilius Varus, reſtore me my legions!" and ſome hiſtorians pretend to ſay, that he never after recovered the former ſerenity of his temper.

But he had ſome uneaſineſſes of a domeſtick nature, in his own family, that contributed to diſtreſs him: he had married Livia, the wife of Tiberius Nero, by the conſent of her huſband, at a time ſhe was ſix months gone with child. This was an imperious woman; and, conſcious of being beloved, ſhe controlled him ever after at her pleaſure. She had two ſons by her former huſband; Tiberius, the elder, whom

whom ſhe greatly loved; and Druſus, who was born three months after ſhe had been married to Auguſtus, and who was thought to be his own ſon. The eldeſt of theſe, Tiberius, whom he afterwards adopted, and who ſucceeded him in the empire, was a good general, but of a ſuſpicious and obſtinate temper; ſo that though he was ſerviceable to Auguſtus in his foreign wars, yet he gave him but little quiet at home. He was, at laſt, obliged to go into exile for five years to the iſland of Rhodes, where he chiefly ſpent his time in a retired manner, converſing with the Greeks, and addicting himſelf to literature; of which, however, he made afterwards but a bad uſe. Druſus, the other ſon of Livia, died in his return from an expedition againſt the Germans, leaving Auguſtus inconſolable for his loſs. But his greateſt affliction was, the conduct of his daughter Julia, whom he had by Scribonia, his former wife. This woman, whom he married to his general Agrippa, and after his death to Tiberius, ſet no bounds to her lewdneſs. Not contented with enjoying her pleaſures, ſhe ſeemed alſo earneſt in publiſhing the infamy of her proſtitutions. Auguſtus, for a long time, would not believe the accounts he daily heard of her conduct; but, at laſt, could not help obſerving it. He found ſhe was arrived at that exceſs of wantonneſs and prodigality, that ſhe

had her nocturnal appointments in the moſt public parts of the city; the very court, where her father preſided, not being exempt from her debaucheries. He, at firſt, had thoughts of putting her to death; but, after ſome conſideration, he baniſhed her to Pandataria, forbidding her the uſe of wine and all ſuch delicacies, as could inflame her vicious inclinations: he ordered alſo, that no perſons ſhould come near her, without his own permiſſion; and ſent her mother Scribonia with her, to bear her company. Afterwards whenever any attempted to intercede for Julia, his anſwer was, "That fire and water ſhould ſooner unite, than "he with her." When ſome perſons, one day, were more than uſually urgent with him in her favour, he was driven to ſuch an extremity of paſſion, as to wiſh, that they might have ſuch a daughter. However, ſhe had two ſons by Agrippa named Caius and Lucius, from whom great expectations were formed; but they died when ſcarcely arrived at man's eſtate; Lucius about five years after his father, at Marſeilles; and Caius, two years after, on his return to Rome, of a wound he had received in Armenia. Thus Auguſtus, having in a great meaſure, ſurvived all his neareſt relations, at length, in the ſeventy-fourth year of his age, began to think of retiring, in good earneſt, from the fatigues of ſtate: and, in ſome meaſure,

of

of conſtituting Tiberius his ſucceſſor in the uſual employments. He deſired the ſenate to ſalute him no longer at the palace according to cuſtom; nor to take it amiſs, if, for the future, he could not converſe with them as formerly. From that time, Tiberius was joined in the government of the provinces with him, and inveſted with almoſt the ſame authority. However, Auguſtus could not entirely forſake the adminiſtration of the ſtate, which habit had mixed with his ſatisfactions; he ſtill continued a watchful guardian of its intereſts, and ſhowed himſelf to the laſt a lover of his people. Finding it now, therefore, very inconvenient to come to the ſenate, by reaſon of his age, he deſired to have twenty privy-counſellors aſſigned him for a year; and it was decreed, that whatever meaſures were reſolved upon by them, together with the conſuls, they ſhould have entirely the force of a law. He ſeemed, in ſome meaſure, apprehenſive of his approaching end, for he made his will, and delivered it to the veſtal virgins. He then ſolemnized the cenſus, or numbering the people, whom he found to amount to four millions, one hundred and thirty-ſeven thouſand; which ſhows Rome to be equal to four of the greateſt cities of modern times. While theſe ceremonies were performing, by U. C. 760.

a mighty concourſe of people in the Campus Martius, it is ſaid, that an eagle flew round the emperor ſeveral times, and directing its flight to a neighbouring temple, perched over the name of Agrippa; which was by the augurs conceived to portend the death of the emperor. Shortly after, having accompanied Tiberius in his march into Illyria, as far as Beneventum, he was there taken ill of a diarrhœa. Returning, therefore, from thence, he came to Nola, near Capua, and there finding himſelf dangerouſly ill he ſent for Tiberius, with the reſt of his moſt intimate friends and acquaintance. He did not continue long to indulge vain hopes of recovery, but convinced that his end was at hand, patiently awaited its arrival. A few hours before his death, he ordered a looking-glaſs to be brought, and his hair to be adjuſted with more than uſual care. He then addreſſed his friends, whom he beheld ſurrounding his bed, and deſired to know, whether he had properly played his part in life; to which being anſwered in the affirmative, he cried out, with his laſt breath, "Then give me your applauſe;" and thus, in the ſeventy-ſixth year of his age, after reigning forty-one, he expired in the arms of Livia, bidding her remember their marriage and farewell.

The

The death of the emperor, when known, cauſed inexpreſſible grief throughout the whole Roman empire; it was even ſuppoſed that his wife Livia had ſome hand in haſtening it, willing to procure the ſucceſſion more ſpeedily for her ſon. However this be, ſhe took care for ſome time to keep it concealed, having guarded all the paſſages to the palace; ſometimes giving out that he was recovered, and pretending a relapſe. At length, having ſettled the ſucceſſion to her mind, ſhe publiſhed the emperor's death, and at the ſame time the adoption of Tiberius to the empire. The emperor's funeral was performed with great magnificence. The ſenators being in their places, Tiberius, on whom the care was devolved, began a conſolatory oration to them; but ſuddenly ſtopped in the beginning of his ſpeech, as unable to reſtrain the violence of his ſorrow; and, inſtead of continuing, gave his notes to Druſus, his ſon, who read them to the ſenate. After this, one of the late emperor's freedmen, publickly read his will in the ſenate-houſe, wherein he made Tiberius and Livia his heirs; and by that, Livia was likewiſe adopted into the Julian family, and honoured with the name of Auguſta. He gave conſiderable legacies to many private perſons, to the prætorian guards, to the legionary ſoldiers, and to all the

citizens of Rome. But his reſentment to his daughter Julia continued even to the laſt; he left her a ſmall legacy indeed, but would neither reſtore her to her family, nor permit her to be buried in the ſepulchre of her anceſtors. Beſides his will, four other writings of his were produced. One, in which he had left inſtructions concerning his funeral; another containing an enumeration of his ſeveral exploits; a third compriſing an account of the provinces, forces, and revenues of the empire; and the fourth, a ſchedule of directions to Tiberius for governing the empire. Among theſe, it was found to be his opinion, that no man, how great a favourite ſoever he might be, ſhould be intruſted with too much authority, leſt it ſhould induce him to turn tyrant. Another maxim was, that none ſhould deſire to enlarge the empire, which was already preſerved with difficulty. Thus he ſeemed ſtudious of ſerving his country to the very laſt, and the ſorrow of the people ſeemed equal to his aſſiduity. It was decreed, that all the women ſhould mourn for him a whole year. Temples were erected to him; divine honours were allowed him; and one Numerius Atticus, a ſenator, willing to convert the adulation of the times to his own benefit, received a large ſum of money, for ſwearing that he ſaw him aſcending

aſcending into heaven; ſo that no doubt remained among the people concerning his divinity.

Such were the honours paid to Auguſtus, whoſe power began in the ſlaughter, and terminated in the happineſs of his ſubjects; ſo that it was ſaid of him, "That it had been "good for mankind if he had never been born, "or if he never had died." It is very probable, that the cruelties exerciſed in his triumvirate, were ſuggeſted by his colleagues; or, perhaps, he thought, in the caſe of Cæſar's death, that revenge was virtue. Certain it is, that theſe ſeverities were, in ſome meaſure, neceſſary to reſtore public tranquillity; for until the Roman ſpirit was entirely eradicated, no monarchy could be ſecure. He gave the government an air ſuited to the diſpoſition of the times; he indulged his ſubjects in the pride of ſeeing the appearance of a republic, while he really made them happy in the effects of a moſt abſolute monarchy, guided by the moſt conſummate prudence. In this laſt virtue he ſeems to have excelled moſt monarchs; and, indeed, could we ſeparate Octavius from Auguſtus, he would be one of the moſt faultleſs princes in hiſtory. The long peace which his ſubjects enjoyed, during his adminiſtration, may be entirely aſcribed to his moderation alone; and

about the middle of his reign, the greateſt part of mankind ſaw themſelves, at once, profeſſing obedience to one monarch, and in perfect harmony with each other. This was the time in which our Saviour, Chriſt, came into the world, to teach new laws, and give new ſanctions to the practice of every human virtue. He was born in Judea, in the ſeven hundred and fifty-ſecond year of Rome, the twenty-fifth of the reign of Auguſtus, and in the four thouſand and third year of the world, according to the common computation.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

TIBERIUS, the THIRD EMPEROR.

TIBERIUS is, perhaps, the ſtrongeſt example of a man, by an exceſs of refinement, deſtroying thoſe very advantages he attempts to ſecure. Auguſtus left him in poſſeſſion of great popularity, and an happy empire; but he immediately found means to injure his popularity, by claiming as a debt, that homage which his predeceſſor was willing to receive as a favour; and ſubverted the happineſs of the empire, by making a diſtinction between the welfare of the prince and the people. Thus all his abilities only ſerved to heighten his errors, and corrupt his heart; till, in the end, his life ſeemed painfully employed, in finding pretexts for appearing what he might eaſily have been; and in deceiving others, by being deceived himſelf. U.C.762. A.D.10.

The firſt object of his ſuſpicion when he came to the empire, was Agrippa Poſthumus, the third and only remaining ſon of the general of that name, by Julia, daughter of Auguſtus.

guſtus. This youth having rather imitated the licentiouſneſs of his mother than the prudence of his father, was baniſhed by Auguſtus into the iſland of Planaſium; and was now murdered by the order of Tiberius, who pretended that it was done by the particular appointment of the late emperor, who was ſollicitous for the ſafety of the ſucceſſion. He even carried his diſſimulation ſo far, that when the centurion, who had executed his commands, came with the account, Tiberius pretended, that he had given no ſuch command, and that he ſhould anſwer for his conduct before the ſenate. However, the buſineſs was huſhed up ſoon after, and no enquiry made after the murderer.

As for the people in general, they were now ready to ſuffer every injury, without murmuring. Every order of the ſtate was ambitious of ſlavery, and only deſirous of ſhewing the extent of their obedience, by the humility of their adulation. All ſuits and petitions were now made to Tiberius; and he, at the ſame time, took care, that nothing material ſhould be done without his concurrence. The ſenate was willing enough to give up the reins of government; yet he had ſo much diſſimulation in his nature, as to wiſh to make his acceptance of them the greateſt favour. He began, therefore, in the ſenate, with great art, to deſcant on the extent of the Roman empire,

and

and the difficulty of guiding it with proper ſkill; he then alledged his own inſufficiency for the taſk, and hinted, that no man could be a worthy ſucceſſor to Auguſtus. But as the city was ſo happily ornamented with great numbers of wiſe and worthy men, it would be more adviſable for a number to unite their care and their counſels, than to lay the whole burden upon him alone. The ſenate, however, well acquainted in the arts of adulation, beſought him, in the moſt humble manner, to accept of the government; and not reject a taſk to which he alone was equal. Tiberius upon this, pretending to be ſomewhat ſoftened, partly accepted their offers; and alledged, that he was unable to take the charge of the whole; but, at their requeſt, declared himſelf willing to undertake the protection of any one part they aſſigned him. Whereupon Aſinius Gallus demanded, what part he was willing to take charge of. This unexpected queſtion quite confounded the diſſembling emperor. He, for ſome time, remained ſilent; but, recovering himſelf, anſwered with a ſubtle reſerve, that it ill became him to chooſe any one part of that, from which he begged a general exemption. Gallus, who perceived he had gone too far, and who, perhaps, only put the queſtion to flatter his vanity, very readily brought himſelf off, by ſaying, "That he did not offer

"that

" that queſtion, as though he deſigned to di-
" vide what was in itſelf indiſſoluble; but
" from his own confeſſion, to convince him
" that the commonwealth was but one body,
" and was conſequently to be actuated only by
" one ſoul." At length Tiberius, ſeemingly overcome by the importunities and clamours of all around him, yielded by degrees to their entreaties; and at laſt condeſcended to take upon him the labour of the government, purely to ſatisfy their wiſhes, rather than his own; adding, however, that he would keep it only till they ſhould think fit to give repoſe to his old age.

U.C.762. A. D. 10. He was now fifty-ſix years old, when he took upon him the government of the Roman empire. He had long lived in a ſtate of profound diſſimulation under Auguſtus, and was not yet hardy enough to ſhow himſelf in his real character. In the beginning of his reign nothing appeared but prudence, generoſity, and clemency. He utterly rejected many of thoſe great names and titles of honour which were ſo liberally offered him by the ſenate. He prohibited their erecting ſtatues to him but upon certain occaſions, and abſolutely forbade their worſhipping him as a deity. Thoſe juſt praiſes alſo which he might have received without cenſure, ſeemed irkſome to him; and he appeared to deſire no other rewards for his labours in the empire, but the

the conſciouſneſs of having deſerved them. When the ſenate offered to ſwear to obey all the ordinances which had not only been made, but thoſe he was about to enact hereafter, he checked their vile adulation; obſerving, That all ſublunary things were mutable and uncertain, and the higher he was raiſed, his ſtate would only be the more expoſed to danger. He aſſumed alſo an appearance of great patience and moderation upon all occaſions; and, though in the ſenate there paſſed ſome things contrary to his will, yet he ſeemed not in the leaſt offended. Having learnt that ſome perſons had ſpoken ill both of him and his government, he ſhowed no reſentment, but mildly replied, that in a free city the tongues of men ought alſo to be free. When the ſenate would have proceeded againſt ſome who had libelled him, he would not conſent, alledging, That he had greater and more uſeful employments, than to embarraſs himſelf with ſuch trifling concerns; adding, That the beſt way of puniſhing ſuch as defamed him was to make the account of his conduct uneaſy to them, or elſe by retaliating their contempt.

When ſome governors had ſhown him a method of increaſing his revenues, he with indignation anſwered, That a good ſhepherd ought to ſhear but never flay his flock. He made many ſumptuary edicts againſt taverns,

and places of public reſort; he puniſhed diſhoneſt matrons, and even prohibited kiſſing by way of ſalutation. He was very vigilant in ſuppreſſing robberies and ſeditions, and cauſed juſtice to be duely and regularly adminiſtered in all the towns of Italy. He alſo behaved in a very reſpectful manner to the ſenate, and in the beginning did nothing of moment without their advice and approbation. They, on their parts, continually forced upon him the moſt extravagant praiſes; ſo that no prince was ever more flattered than he. Nor is it an improbable conjecture to ſuppoſe, that ſuch adulation induced him more boldly to throw aſide the maſk of diſſimulation.

The ſucceſs of Germanicus firſt brought his natural diſpoſitions to light, and diſcovered the malignity of his mind without diſguiſe. He was ſcarce well ſettled on his throne, when he received intelligence that the legions in Pannonia, hearing of the death of Auguſtus, and deſirous of novelty, had revolted; but theſe were ſoon quieted, and Percennius their leader ſlain. A commotion, in Germany was attended with much more important conſequences. The legions in that part of the empire were conducted by Germanicus, the ſon of Druſus, late brother of Tiberius, a youth of moſt admirable qualities, and who had been, at the late emperor's requeſt,

adopted, in order to ſucceed to the empire. The legions under his command had taken the opportunity of his abſence to revolt, and now boldly began to affirm that the whole Roman empire was in their power, and that its principal grandeur was owing to the ſucceſs of their arms; wherefore, when Germanicus returned, they unanimouſly reſolved to chooſe him emperor. This general was the darling of the ſoldiers, and almoſt idolized by them, ſo that he might with very little difficulty have raiſed himſelf to the higheſt dignity in the ſtate; but his duty prevailed over his ambition; he rejected their offers with the utmoſt indignation, and uſed the moſt indefatigable endeavours to quell the ſedition. This he effected, though with extreme hazard, by cutting off many of the principal revolters, and then by leading the troops againſt the Germans, who were conſidered as the common enemies of the empire.

Tiberius was as much pleaſed with the loyalty of Germanicus as he was diſtreſſed at his ſuperior popularity; his ſucceſs alſo immediately after, againſt the Germans, ſtill more excited the emperor's envy and private diſguſt; he overthrew the enemy in ſeveral battles, ſubduing many wild and extenſive countries, the Angrivarii, the Cheruſci, and the Chatti, with other fierce nations beyond the Rhine. Among his other conqueſts it was

was not conſidered as the leaſt honourable, that of recovering the ſtandards that had been taken from the unfortunate Varus, and erecting trophies to the memory of his own legions, in thoſe very wilds in which the legions of the former were ſlain. Upon one of the monuments of his victories he placed a modeſt inſcription; mentioning only the people who were conquered, and the army which made the conqueſt, entirely omitting his own name, either willing to avoid envy, or ſenſible that poſterity would ſupply the defect.

All theſe victories, however, only ſerved to enflame the emperor's jealouſy, and every virtue in the general now became a new cauſe of offence. This diſlike firſt began to appear by Tiberius's making uſe of every pretence to draw Germanicus from the legions; but he was for awhile obliged to poſtpone his purpoſe, upon account of a domeſtick inſurrection, which was made in Italy by one Clemens, who had been a ſlave to the young Agrippa that was ſlain. This adventurer being about the ſame age, and in perſon very much reſembling his late maſter, took upon him his name, and cauſed it to be reported in all parts of Italy that
A. D. 17. Agrippa was ſtill alive. This report, idle as it was, had a ſurpriſing influence through the empire, and raiſed great tumults in many towns of Italy, Clemens himſelf boldly aſſerting his claim,

claim, and now and then appearing in different parts of the country, when he could do it with ſafety. Tiberius, however, knew but too well the impoſture, and was reſolved to oppoſe fraud on his ſide to that of this young pretender. Accordingly, two ſoldiers were employed, who were to find him out, and by pretending an attachment to his perſon, ſeiſe him upon the firſt opportunity. This commiſſion they executed with punctuality and ſucceſs. Clemens was taken priſoner, and brought before Tiberius, who ſternly demanded how he came to be Agrippa? To which the other as boldly replied, "By the ſame arts with which you "have become Cæſar." Tiberius finding by his reſolution that it was vain to expect any diſcovery from him of his accomplices, reſolved to put him immediately to death; however, ſuch were his apprehenſions from the people that he would not puniſh him publickly, but ordered him to be conveyed to a ſecret apartment in the palace, and there to be privately executed.

Having thus got rid of his domeſtick enemy, he turned his thoughts on the moſt ſpecious means of bringing home Germanicus from the legions in Germany. An invaſion of the Parthians afforded him the faireſt opportunity. That fierce and unconquerable people having ſlain two of their own kings, and refuſed to

accept one who had been an hoſtage at Rome, and was, it ſeems, the lawful ſucceſſor; they broke the peace, which had been ratified in the reign of Auguſtus, and invaded Armenia, a kingdom tributary to the empire. Tiberius was not diſpleaſed at this invaſion, as it gave him a pretext for recalling Germanicus, and therefore removing him from the command of thoſe legions, which were too much devoted to his intereſt. He began by procuring him a triumph for his victory in Germany; and then writing to him to return, in order to enjoy theſe honours which the ſenate had decreed: adding, that he had reaped enough of glory in a country where he had been ſent nine times, and had been every time victorious; concluding, that the number of triumphs was ſufficient; and, that the moſt ſignal vengeance that could be inflicted on them, was their being permitted to continue on their own inteſtine diviſions. To theſe ſpecious civilities Germanicus made no direct reply, but earneſtly entreated the continuance of his command for one year longer, only to finiſh the enterprizes he had begun. Tiberius, however, was too well ſkilled in diſſimulation not to prevail upon him by a repetition of pretended honours; he offered him the conſulſhip, and deſired him to execute the office in perſon: ſo that Germanicus having no longer any pretences for refuſing, and finding

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the ſeaſon was very far advanced, he delayed his return no longer. He was met many miles out of the city by infinite multitudes, who received him rather with marks of adoration than reſpect: the gracefulneſs of his perſon; his triumphal chariot, in which were carried his five children; and the recovered ſtandards of the army of Varus, threw the people into a phrenzy of joy and admiration. Tiberius, though inwardly repining, ſeemed to join in the general rapture: he gave the people, in the name of Germanicus, three hundred ſeſterces each man; and, the ſucceeding year, made him his colleague in the conſulſhip. However, his aim was to ſend him diſtant from Rome, where his popularity was now become odious to him; and yet, not to give him ſuch a command as could at any time be turned againſt himſelf. The Parthian invaſion was very convenient for his deſigns; and, beſides, there now offered other pretexts for ſending him into Aſia; which might be conſidered as no better than a ſpecious baniſhment. Antiochus, king of Comagena, and Philopater, king of Cilicia, being both dead, ſome differences aroſe in thoſe nations to the prejudice of the Romans. At the ſame time alſo, Syria and Judæa, overburthened with taxes, made earneſt ſupplications for redreſs. Theſe, therefore, appeared to be objects worthy the attention

of Germanicus: and Tiberius was not wanting in urging before the ſenate the neceſſity there was of his preſence in that quarter of the empire. In conſequence of this all the provinces of Aſia were readily decreed to Germanicus; and a greater power given him than had been granted to any governor before. But Tiberius, to reſtrain this power, had ſent Cneius Piſo governor into Syria: having diſpoſſeſſed Silenus of that office. This Piſo was a perſon of a furious and headſtrong temper; and, in every reſpect, fit to execute thoſe fatal purpoſes for which he was deſigned. His inſtructions were to oppoſe Germanicus upon every occaſion; and to excite all the hatred againſt him, which, without ſuſpicion, he could; and even to procure his death, if an opportunity ſhould offer.

A. D. 18. Germanicus, being now appointed to his new dignity, departed from Rome for his eaſtern expedition, carrying with him his wife Agrippina, and his children. In the mean time, Piſo, purſuant to his directions, endeavoured to gain the affections of the ſoldiers, by all the arts of bribery and adulation. He took every opportunity of abuſing Germanicus; and taxed him with diminiſhing the Roman glory, by his peculiar protection to that people who called themſelves Athenians, but were now ſuch no longer: Germanicus diſregarded his invectives; being

being more employed in executing the buſineſs of his commiſſion, than in counteracting the private deſigns of Piſo. In a ſhort time, he replaced the king of Armenia, who was a friend to the Romans; and reduced Cilicia and Comagena into Roman provinces; placing prætors there to collect the taxes due to the empire. He ſoon after obliged the king of Parthia to ſue for peace; which was granted him, much to the advantage and honour of Rome. However, Piſo, and his wife Plancina, who is recorded as a woman of an implacable and cruel diſpoſition, continued to defame him and openly to cenſure all his proceedings. Theſe efforts of ineffective malice were quite diſregarded; Germanicus oppoſed only patience and condeſcenſion to all their invectives; and, with that gentleneſs which was peculiar to him, repaid their reſentments by courteſy. He was not ignorant of their motives; and was rather willing to evade than oppoſe their enmity. Wherefore, he took a voyage into Egypt, under a pretence of viewing the celebrated antiquities of that country; but, in reality, to avoid the machinations of Piſo, and thoſe of his wife, which were ſtill more dangerous. However, upon his return, he fell ſick; and, whether from a mind previouſly alarmed, or from more apparent marks of treachery, he ſent to let Piſo know, that he broke off all further con-

nexions and friendſhip with him. A ſhort interval of convaleſcence reſtored the hopes of his friends, and the citizens of Antioch prepared to offer ſacrifices for his recovery: However, Piſo, with his lictors, diſturbed their ſolemnities, and drove off their victims from the foot of the altars. In the mean time Germanicus grew daily worſe; and his death now began to appear inevitable. Whereupon, finding his end approaching, he addreſſed his friends who ſtood round his bed, to the following effect: "Had "my death been natural, I might have reaſon "to complain of being thus ſnatched away from "all the endearments of life, at ſo early an age; "but now my complaints are aggravated, in "falling the victim of Piſo and Plancina's "treachery. Let the emperor, therefore, I "conjure you, know the manner of my death, "and the tortures I ſuffer. Thoſe who loved "me, when living, thoſe even who envied my "fortune, will feel ſome regret, when they hear "of a ſoldier, who had ſo often eſcaped the "rage of the enemy, falling a ſacrifice to the "treachery of a woman. Plead then my cauſe "before the people; you will be heard with "pity; and if my murderers ſhould pretend to "have acted by command, they will either re-"ceive no credit or no pardon." As he ſpoke theſe words he ſtretched forth his hand, which his weeping friends tenderly preſſing, moſt earneſtly

neſtly vowed, that they would ſooner loſe their lives than their revenge. The dying prince then turning to his wife, conjured her by his memory, and all the bonds of nuptial love, to ſubmit to the neceſſity of the times, and to evade the reſentment of her more powerful enemies, by not oppoſing it. Thus much he ſaid openly; ſomething more was uttered in private; intimating, as was ſuppoſed, his fears from the emperor's cruelty; and ſhortly after he expired. Nothing could exceed the diſtreſs of the whole empire, upon hearing of the death of Germanicus. But the people of Rome ſeemed to put no bounds to their diſtreſs. A vacation was made in all publick and domeſtick duties; the ſtreets were filled with lamentations; the people caſt ſtones at their temples, and flung down their altars; while new born infants were expoſed, as objects not worthy paternal attention in this univerſal diſtreſs. So much was the ſpirit of the people now changed from its former fortitude and equality. They now were ſo accuſtomed to place their happineſs in paying homage to their maſters, that they conſidered the ſafety of the ſtate as compriſed in an individual. In fact, the community was now compoſed of perſons who had lately received their freedom; or of ſuch indolent and idle people as lived at the expence of the publick treaſure. Theſe were, therefore,

ſenſible of nothing but their own imbecility; and afflicted themſelves, like children, for evils which were only ſuggeſted by their fears.

In this univerſal diſtreſs, Piſo ſeemed marked for deſtruction. Hiſtorians, in general, charge him and his wife with the death of Germanicus; it is now too remote a period to controvert their teſtimony; however, the general accuſation of their giving him a ſlow poiſon, is one of thoſe imputations that ſeems to have but little foundation. The belief of ſlow poiſons is now much diſputed; it being in general ſuppoſed by phyſicians, that it is not in the power of art to regulate the duration of their effect. Let this be as it will, not only Piſo and his wife, but even the emperor himſelf, with his mother Livia, incurred a ſhare of the general ſuſpicion. Theſe were ſoon after greatly increaſed by the arrival of Agrippina, the widow of Germanicus, a woman in high eſteem for her virtue, who appeared bearing the aſhes of her huſband, and attended by all her children. As ſhe approached the city, ſhe was met by the ſenate, and the whole body of the people of Rome, with a ſtrange mixture of acclamation and ſorrow. The veteran ſoldiers, many of whom had ſerved under Germanicus, gave the ſincereſt teſtimonies of their concern. The whole multitude, while the aſhes were depoſiting in the tomb of Auguſtus, at firſt regarded

the ceremony in profound ſilence; but ſhortly after, all of a ſudden, broke out into loud lamentations; crying, that the commonwealth was now no more.

Tiberius, whoſe jealouſy had ſome reaſon to be alarmed at this effeminate exceſs of ſorrow, uſed all his art to conceal his anger, and make a ſhow of ſharing in the general calamity. He even permitted the accuſation of Piſo, who was ſuppoſed to be merely the inſtrument of his vengeance. This general having returned to Rome ſhortly after, preſuming on the great favour he was in with the emperor, was accuſed before the ſenate, in behalf of Agrippina and her friends, of the death of Germanicus, and ſeveral other crimes; particularly his cruelty to good men, and his corrupting the legions, were laid to his charge.

Piſo, either conſcious of his innocence, or ſeeing the inefficacy of any defence againſt the tide of popularity, vindicated himſelf but weakly againſt every part of the charge. However, the poiſoning of Germanicus could not be made evident enough to ſatisfy his judges, who ſeemed to take part againſt him. His trial was therefore drawn out to a greater length than was expected; but in the mean time, he cut it ſhort, by putting an end to his life in his own houſe. His wife Plancina, who was univerſally believed to be moſt culpable, eſcaped

puniſhment

puniſhment by the intereſt of Livia; ſo that all diſturbances raiſed upon this account, by degrees ſubſided.

About a year after the death of Germanicus, Tiberius took his own ſon Druſus, as a colleague with him in the conſulſhip; and, willing to initiate him into buſineſs betimes, left him in the government of the city; while he himſelf retired, under the pretence of indiſpoſition. About this time, ſeveral nations of the Gauls revolted, being unable to endure the heavy tributes which the emperor had lately impoſed upon them. The principal leaders in this revolt were Florus and Sacrovir; who were ſo ſucceſsful in the beginning, that the fame of their ſucceſſes ſpread conſternation even as far as Rome. Caius Silius, however, marched with the Roman legions to oppoſe them; and gained a great and deciſive victory. A revolt alſo happened about this time in Numidia, under Tacfarinas, who had rebelled once before; but he was now, in ſome meaſure, brought under by Blæſus; who, in conſequence, received the honour of being ſaluted Imperator, by the permiſſion of Tiberius.

Hitherto Tiberius had kept within bounds; he was frugal, juſt in the diſtribution of offices, a rigid puniſher of injuſtice in others, and an example of temperance to his luxurious court. But now, from the ninth year of his reign,

reign, it is that hiſtorians begin to trace the bloody effects of his ſuſpicious temper.

Having no object of jealouſy to keep him in awe, he began to pull off the maſk entirely, and appear more in his natural character than before. He no longer adopted that wiſeſt maxim, the truth of which has familiariſed it into a proverb, that "honeſty is the beſt po-"licy." With him, judgement, juſtice, and extent of thinking, were converted to ſlyneſs, artifice, and expedients adapted to momentary conjunctures. He took upon himſelf the interpretation of all political meaſures; and gave morals whatever colour he choſe, by the fine-drawn ſpeculations of his own malicious mind. He began daily to diminiſh the authority of the ſenate; which deſign was much facilitated by their own aptitude to ſlavery; ſo that he deſpiſed their meanneſs, while he enjoyed its effects. A law at that time ſubſiſted, which made it treaſon to form any injurious attempt againſt the majeſty of the people. Tiberius aſſumed to himſelf the interpretation and enforcement of this law, and extended it not only to the caſes which really affected the ſafety of the ſtate, but to every conjuncture that could poſſibly be favourable to his hatred or ſuſpicions. All freedom was conſequently baniſhed from convivial meetings; and diffidence reigned amongſt the deareſt relations. The gloomy diſpoſition

diſpoſition and inſincerity of the prince, were diffuſed through all ranks of men: friendſhip had the air of an allurement to betray; and a fine genius was but a ſhining indiſcretion; even virtue itſelf was conſidered as an impertinent intruder, that only ſerved to remind the people of their loſt happineſs.

The law of offended majeſty being revived, the firſt of note that fell a ſacrifice to it, was Cremutius Cordus, who, in his annals of the Roman empire, had called Brutus the laſt of the Romans. It is alſo thought he had given offence to Sejanus, the emperor's favourite, by too great liberty in private converſation. This brave man ſeeing his death reſolved upon, defended himſelf in the ſenate with great force, and undaunted reſolution. Then going home, he reſolved to defeat the malice of the tyrant, by a voluntary death, and refuſed to take any manner of ſuſtenance. The informers, who perceived that he was upon the point of depriving them of their reward, preſented their complaints to the ſenate, ſignifying his intentions of eſcaping juſtice. However, while their petitions continued under deliberation, Cremutius, as Seneca expreſſes it, pronounced his own abſolution by dying.

It was in the beginning of theſe cruelties, that Tiberius took into his confidence Sejanus, a Roman knight, who found out the method of gaining

gaining his confidence by the moſt refined degree of diſſimulation, being an overmatch for his maſter in his own arts. This favourite miniſter, by birth a Volſcian, was cloſe and ſubtle in his deſigns, but bold and aſpiring in his attempts; modeſt to outward appearance, but concealing an ambition that knew no bounds. He was ſo ſecure in the affections of the emperor, that though ever ſo reſerved and ſecret to others, he was entirely open and explicit with him. He was made by the emperor, captain of the prætorian guards, one of the moſt confidential truſts in the ſtate; and extolled in the ſenate as a worthy aſſociate in his labours. The ſervile ſenators, with ready adulation, ſet up the ſtatues of the favourite beſide thoſe of Tiberius, and ſeemed eager to pay him ſimilar honours. It is not well known whether he was the adviſer of all the cruelties that enſued after; but certain it is, that, from the beginning of his miniſtry, Tiberius ſeemed to become more fatally ſuſpicious.

It was from ſuch humble beginnings, that this miniſter even ventured to aſpire at the throne, and was reſolved to make the emperor's fooliſh confidence one of the firſt ſteps to his ruin. However, he conſidered that cutting off Tiberius alone, would rather retard than promote his deſigns, while his ſon Druſus, and the children of Germanicus, were yet remaining.

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He therefore began by corrupting Livia, the wife of Druſus, whom, after having debauched, he prevailed upon to poiſon her huſband. This was effected by means of a ſlow poiſon (as we are told) which gave his death the appearance of a caſual diſtemper. Tiberius, in the mean time, either naturally phlegmatick, or, at beſt, not much regarding his ſon, bore his death with great tranquillity. He was even heard to jeſt upon the occaſion; for, when the ambaſſadors from Troy came ſomewhat late with their compliments of condolance, he anſwered their pretended diſtreſſes, by condoling with them alſo upon the death of Hector.

Sejanus, having ſucceeded in this, was reſolved to make his next attempt upon the children of Germanicus, who were undoubted ſucceſſors to the empire. However, he was fruſtrated in his deſigns, both with regard to the fidelity of their governors, and the chaſtity of Agrippina, their mother. Whereupon, he reſolved upon changing his aims, and removing Tiberius out of the city; by which means he expected more frequent opportunities of putting his deſigns into execution. He therefore uſed all his addreſs to perſuade Tiberius to retire to ſome agreeable retreat, remote from Rome. By this he expected many advantages ſince there could be no acceſs to the emperor but by him. Thus all letters being conveyed to

the prince by ſoldiers at his own devotion, they would paſs through his hands; by which means he muſt in time become the ſole governor of the empire; and, at laſt, be in a capacity of removing all obſtacles to his ambition. He now, therefore, began to inſinuate to Tiberius the great and numerous inconveniences of the city; the fatigues of attending the ſenate; and the ſeditious temper of the inferior citizens of Rome. Tiberius, either prevailed upon by his perſuaſions, or purſuing the natural turn of his temper, which led to indolence and debauchery, in the twelfth year of his reign left Rome, and went into Campania, under pretence of dedicating temples to Jupiter and Auguſtus. After this, though he removed to ſeveral places, he never returned to Rome, but ſpent the greateſt part of his time in the iſland of Caprea, a place which was rendered as infamous by his pleaſures, as deteſtable by his cruelties, which were ſhocking to human nature. For having, in purſuance of his intentions, dedicated the temples which he had built in Campania, he publiſhed an edict, forbidding all perſons to diſturb his repoſe; and ſtopped the concourſe of his ſubjects by placing ſoldiers in the ways which led to his palace. But ſtill growing weary of places where mankind might follow him with their complaints and diſtreſſes, he withdrew himſelf, as was ſaid, into that moſt

delightful

delightful iſland of Caprea, three miles from the continent and oppoſite Naples. Buried in this retreat, he gave himſelf up to his pleaſures, quite regardleſs of the miſeries of his ſubjects. Thus an inſurrection of the Jews, upon placing his ſtatue in Jeruſalem, under the government of Pontius Pilate, gave him no ſort of uneaſineſs. The falling of an amphitheatre at Fidenæ, in which fifty thouſand perſons were either killed or wounded, no way affected his repoſe. He was only employed in ſtudying how to vary his odious pleaſures, and forcing his feeble frame, ſhattered by age and former debaucheries, into the enjoyment of them. Nothing can preſent a more horrid picture than the retreat of this impure old man, attended in this place by all the miniſters of his perverted appetites. He was at this time ſixty-ſeven years old; his perſon was moſt diſpleaſing; and ſome ſay the diſagreeableneſs of it, in a great meaſure, drove him into a retirement. He was quite bald before; his face was all broke out into ulcers, and covered all over with plaiſters; his body was bowed forward, while its extreme height and leanneſs increaſed its deformity. With ſuch a perſon, and a mind ſtill more hideous, being gloomy, ſuſpicious, and cruel, he ſat down with a view rather of forcing his appetites than ſatisfying them. He ſpent whole nights in

debaucheries

debaucheries at the table; and he appointed Pomponius Flaccus, and Lucius Piſo, to the firſt poſts of the empire, for no other merit than that of having ſat up with him two days and two nights without interruption. Theſe he called his friends of all hours. He made one Novelius Torquatus a prætor, for being able to drink off five bottles of wine at a draught. His luxuries of another kind were ſtill more deteſtable, and ſeemed to increaſe with his drunkenneſs and gluttony. He made the moſt eminent women of Rome ſubſervient to his luſts, and all his inventions only ſeemed calculated how to make his vices more extravagant and abominable. Here he invented rooms adapted to his libidinous exerciſes, where he made uſe of all manner of incentives which nothing but the depraved imagination of a tyrant could delight in. The numberleſs obſcene medals dug up in that iſland at this day bear witneſs at once to his ſhame, and the veracity of the hiſtorians who have deſcribed his debaucheries. In ſhort, in this retreat, which was ſurrounded with rocks on every ſide, he quite gave up the buſineſs of the empire; or, if he was ever active, it was only to do miſchief.

In fact, it had been happy for mankind, had he given up his ſuſpicions, when he declined the fatigues of reigning, and reſigned the will

to do harm, when he diveſted himſelf of the power of doing good. But from the time of his retreat he became more cruel, and Sejanus always endeavoured to increaſe his diſtruſts. Secret ſpies and informers were placed in all parts of the city, who converted the moſt harmleſs actions into ſubjects of offence. If any perſon of merit teſtified any concern for the glory of the empire, it was immediately conſtrued into a deſign to obtain it. If another ſpoke with regret of former liberty, he was ſuppoſed to aim at re-eſtabliſhing the commonwealth. Every action became liable to forced interpretations; joy expreſſed an hope of the prince's death; melancholy, an envying of his proſperity. Sejanus found his aims every day ſucceeding; the wretched emperor's terrors were an inſtrument that he wrought upon at his pleaſure, and by which he levelled every obſtacle to his deſigns. But the chief objects of his jealouſy were the children of Germanicus, whom he reſolved to put out of the way. He therefore ſedulouſly continued to render them obnoxious to the emperor, to alarm him with falſe reports of their ambition, and to terrify them with alarms of his intended cruelty. By theſe means, he ſo contrived to widen the breach, that he actually produced on both ſides thoſe diſpoſitions which he pretended to obviate: till, at length, the two princes,

Nero

Nero and Druſus, were declared enemies to the ſtate, and afterwards ſtarved to death in priſon, while Agrippina, their mother, was ſent into baniſhment.

In conſequence of their pretended crimes, many others loſt their lives. Sabinus, who was attached to their intereſts, was accuſed and condemned by a moſt vile combination of informers againſt him. Alſinius Gallus was ſentenced to remain in priſon only to increaſe the rigour of his puniſhment by a lingering death. Syriacus was condemned and executed, merely for being a friend to the latter. In this manner Sejanus proceeded, removing all who ſtood between him and the empire, and every day increaſing in confidence with Tiberius, and power with the ſenate. The number of his ſtatues exceeded even thoſe of the emperor; people ſwore by his fortune, in the ſame manner as they would have done, had he been actually upon the throne, and he was more dreaded than even the tyrant who actually enjoyed the empire. But the rapidity of his riſe ſeemed only preparatory to the greatneſs of his downfall. All we know of his firſt diſgrace with the emperor is, that Satrius Secundus was the man who had the boldneſs to accuſe him. Antonia, the mother of Germanicus, ſeconded the accuſation. What were the particulars of his crimes, we now cannot learn; but

certain it is, that he attempted to uſurp the empire by aiming at the life of Tiberius; but his own life was very opportunely ſubſtituted to that againſt which he aimed. Tiberius, ſenſible of the traitor's power, proceeded with his uſual diſſimulation in having him apprehended. He granted him new honours at the very time he reſolved his death, and took him as his colleague in the conſulſhip. The emperor's letter to the ſenate began only with ſlight complaints againſt his friend, but ended with an order for putting him in priſon. He entreated the ſenators to protect a poor old man, as he was, abandoned by all; and in the mean time prepared ſhips for his flight, and ordered ſoldiers for his ſecurity. The ſenate, who had long been jealous of the favourite's power, and dreaded his cruelty, immediately took this opportunity of going beyond their orders. Inſtead of ſentencing him to impriſonment, they directed his execution. A ſtrange revolution now appeared in the city: of thoſe numbers that but a moment before were preſſing into the preſence of Sejanus with offers of ſervice and adulation, not one was found that would ſeem to be of his acquaintance: he was deſerted by all; and thoſe who had formerly received the greateſt benefits from him, ſeemed now converted into his moſt inveterate enemies. As he was conduct-

ing to execution, the people loaded him with inſult and execration. He attempted to hide his face with his hands, but even this was denied him, and his hands were ſecured. He was purſued with ſarcaſtick reproaches, his ſtatues were inſtantly thrown down, and he himſelf ſhortly after ſtrangled by the executioner. Nor did the rage of his enemies ſubſide with his death; his body was ignominiouſly dragged about the ſtreets, and his whole family executed with him. Such was the end of Sejanus; a ſtriking example of the inſtability of every favourite's power, and the precariouſneſs of every tyrant's friendſhip.

His death only lighted up the emperor's rage for further executions. Plancina, the wife of Piſo, was put to death, as little pitied as the former. Sextus Veſtilius ſhared the ſame fate, as it was pretended, for having written a ſatire againſt Caligula, the only ſurviving ſon of Germanicus; but his real fault was, that his ſevere virtues were become intolerable to the vicious emperor. Veſcularius Atticus and Julius Marinus, formerly the inſeparable friends of Tiberius, and who had been his companions in Rhodes, were now executed by his command for being attached to Sejanus; and Mamercus Scaurus was alſo obliged to prevent his execution by ſuicide, for having written a

tragedy upon the ſtory of Atreus. The ſuſpicious emperor applied to himſelf the invective that was alledged againſt tyrants in general; and declared in a rage, that if he was become an Atreus, he would compel the author to become an Ajax. Vitia, an aged woman, was put to death, only for having lamented the execution of her ſon. Fuſius and his wife Publia, being accuſed of treaſon againſt the emperor, were obliged to prevent their condemnation by ſuicide. Confidius Proculus, as he was chearfully employed amongſt his friends, in celebrating his birth-day, found himſelf in an inſtant dragged before the ſenate, accuſed of conſpiring againſt the emperor, condemned, and executed: the whole family of Theophanes was treated with the ſame cruel expedition. Sextus Marius found his riches and the beauty of his daughter ſufficient cauſes to procure his conviction and death. The priſons were crowded with pretended accomplices in the conſpiracy of Sejanus. Tiberius began to grow weary of particular execution; he therefore gave orders, that all the accuſed ſhould be put to death together, without further examination. The whole city was filled with ſlaughter and mourning. The place of execution was a deplorable ſcene, where perſons of every ſex and age were expoſed, racked, and mangled; dead bodies, putrefying, lay heaped on each other, while even the friends

of the wretched convicts were denied the ſatisfaction of weeping. Thus miſerable were the Romans, under the arbitrary rod of this gloomy tyrant; no perſon, though ever ſo virtuous, could be ſafe; or, rather every virtue was but an approach to new dangers. Of twenty ſenators, whom he choſe for his council, he put ſixteen to death. "Let them hate me (cried "he) ſo long as they obey me." He even averred, that Priam was an happy man, who outlived all his poſterity. In this manner there was not a day without ſome barbarous execution, in which the ſufferers were obliged to undergo the moſt ſhameful indignities and exquiſite torments. When one Carnulius had killed himſelf, to avoid the torture: "Ah, "(cried Tiberius) how has that man been "able to eſcape me!" When a priſoner earneſtly entreated, that he would not defer his death:—"No, (cried the tyrant) I am not "ſufficiently your friend, to ſhorten your tor-"ment." Sometimes he was more jocoſe in his cruelties, particularly when a certain man, ſtopping an hearſe, deſired the dead body to tell Auguſtus, that his legacies to the people were yet unpaid. Tiberius ſent for him, and, having paid him his ſhare, cauſed him to be immediately executed; bidding him to tell Auguſtus, that he, at leaſt, had been ſatisfied. One would have thought that ſuch cruelties, exer-

ciſed at Rome, would have ſatiated his love of vengeance; but Caprea itſelf, the place ſecluded for his pleaſures and his eaſe, was daily contaminated, not leſs with his cruelties than his debauchery. He often ſatisfied his eyes with the tortures of the wretches who were put to death before him; and in the days of Suetonius the rock was to be ſeen, from which he ordered ſuch as diſpleaſed him to be thrown headlong. As he was one day examining ſome perſons upon the rack, he was told that an old friend of his was come from Rhodes to ſee him. Tiberius ſuppoſing him brought for the purpoſes of information, immediately ordered him to the torture; and when he was convinced of his miſtake, he ordered him to be put to death to prevent further diſcovery.

In this manner did the tyrant continue to torment others, although he was himſelf ſtill more tortured by his own ſuſpicions. In one of his letters to the ſenate, he confeſſed that the gods and goddeſſes had ſo afflicted and confounded him, that he knew not what, or how to write: and, in fact, he had every reaſon for ſuch a confeſſion; a plotting ſenate, a reviling people, his bodily infirmities increaſed by his luxuries, and his neareſt friends conſcious of being ſuſpected. The domeſtick policy of the empire, alſo, was in the hands of miſcreants; and the frontier provinces were invaded with impunity.

impunity. Meſia was ſeiſed on by the Dacians and Sarmatians; Gaul was waſted by the Germans; and Armenia conquered by the king of Parthia. Theſe were loſſes that might excite the vigilance of any other governor but Tiberius. He, however, was ſo much a ſlave to his brutal appetites, that he left his provinces wholly to the care of his lieutenants, and they were intent rather on the accumulation of private fortune, than the ſafety of the ſtate. Such a total diſorder in the empire might be naturally ſuppoſed to produce a degree of anxiety in him who governed it; ſo that he was heard to wiſh, That Heaven and earth might periſh with him when he died.

In this manner he lived, odious to all the world, and troubleſome to himſelf; an enemy to the lives of others, and a tormentor of his own. At length, however, in the twenty-ſecond year of his reign, he began to feel the approaches of his diſſolution, and all his appetites totally to forſake him. He now, therefore, found it was time to think of a ſucceſſor, and heſitated for a long while whether he ſhould chooſe Caligula, whoſe vices were too apparent to eſcape his obſervation. He had been often heard to ſay, That this youth had all the faults of Sylla, without his virtues; that he was a ſerpent that would ſting the empire, and a Phaëton that would ſet the world in a flame.

However,

However, notwithſtanding all his well grounded apprehenſions, he named him for his ſucceſſor; willing, perhaps, by the enormity of Caligula's conduct, to cover the memory of his own.

But though he thought fit to chooſe a ſucceſſor, he could by no means think of dying: though totally forſaken by his appetites and enjoyments, his diſſimulation never forſook him: he, therefore, concealed his approaching decline with the utmoſt care, as if he was willing at once to hide it from the world and himſelf. He long had a contempt for phyſic, and refuſed the advice of ſuch as attended him: he even ſeemed to take a pleaſure in being preſent at the ſports of the ſoldiers, and ventured himſelf to throw a javelin at a boar that was let looſe before him. The effort which he made upon this occaſion, cauſed a pain in his ſide, which haſtened the approaches of death: ſtill, however, he ſeemed willing to avoid his end; and ſtrove, by change of place, to put off the inquietude of his own reflections. He left his favourite iſland, and went upon the continent: he at laſt fixed at the promontory of Miſenum, in a houſe that formerly had belonged to Lucullus. It was there that Charicles, his phyſician, pretending to kiſs his hand, felt the failure of his pulſe, and apprized Macro, the emperor's preſent favourite, that he had not above

two

two days to live. Tiberius, on the contrary, who had perceived the art of Charicles, did all in his power to impreſs his attendants with an opinion of his health: he continued at table till the evening: he ſaluted all his gueſts as they left the room, and read the acts of the ſenate, in which they had abſolved ſome perſons he had written againſt with great indignation. He reſolved to take ſignal vengeance of their diſobedience, and meditated new ſchemes of cruelty, when he fell into ſuch faintings, as all believed were fatal. It was in this ſituation, that, by Macro's advice, Caligula prepared to ſecure the ſucceſſion. He received the congratulations of the whole court, he cauſed himſelf to be acknowledged by the prætorian ſoldiers, and went forth from the emperor's apartment amidſt the applauſes of the multitude; when all of a ſudden he was informed that the emperor was recovered, that he had begun to ſpeak, and deſired to eat. This unexpected account filled the whole court with terror and alarm: every one who had before been earneſt in teſtifying their joy, now re-aſſumed their pretended ſorrow, and left the new emperor through a feigned ſollicitude for the fate of the old. Caligula himſelf ſeemed thunderſtruck; he preſerved a gloomy ſilence, expecting nothing but death, inſtead of the empire at which he had aſpired. Macro, however, who was hardened in crime,

ordered

ordered that the dying emperor ſhould be diſpatched by ſmothering him with pillows, or, as others will have it, by poiſon. In this manner Tiberius died in the ſeventy-eighth year of his age, after reigning twenty-two.

U. C. 785. A.D. 37.

Little can be added to the character of this prince, which, in every inſtance, was ſo ſtrongly marked with cruelty and diſſimulation. It only remains, therefore, to characteriſe the people whom he governed. The Romans were, at this time, arrived at the higheſt pitch of effeminacy and vice. The wealth of almoſt every nation in the empire, having for ſome time, circulated through the city, brought with it the luxuries peculiar to each country; ſo that Rome preſented a deteſtable picture of various pollution. In this reign lived Appicius, ſo well known for having reduced gluttony into a ſyſtem; ſome of the notorious in this way, thought it no ſhame to give near an hundred pounds for a ſingle fiſh, and exhauſt a fortune of fifty thouſand pounds in one entertainment. Debaucheries of every other kind kept pace with this; while the deteſtable folly of the times thought it was refining upon pleaſure to make it unnatural. There were at Rome men called Spintriæ, whoſe ſole trade it was, to ſtudy new modes of pleaſure; and theſe were univerſally favourites of the great. The ſenators were long fallen from their authority, and were no leſs

eſtranged

eſtranged from their integrity and honour. Their whole ſtudy ſeemed to be, how to invent new ways of flattering the emperor, and various methods of tormenting his ſuppoſed enemies. The people were ſtill more corrupt; they had, for ſome years, been accuſtomed to live in idleneſs, upon the donations of the emperor; and, being ſatisfied with ſubſiſtence, entirely gave up their freedom. Too effeminate and cowardly to go to war, they only railed againſt their governors; ſo that they were bad ſoldiers, and ſeditious citizens. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that ſuch indifferent ſubjects ſhould be indifferently governed. It has been often aſked, how ſo many of the emperors were bad princes. The anſwer is eaſy—becauſe the people whom they had to command, were ill diſpoſed to obey. Good ſubjects generally make good kings; while luxury, ſedition, diſcontent; and murmurs in the populace, as uſually produce ſeverity, cruelty, and ſuſpicion in him who is appointed to govern. Little more need be ſaid of theſe times, but that, in the eighteenth year of this monarch's reign, Chriſt was crucified; as if the univerſal depravity of mankind wanted no leſs a ſacrifice than that of God himſelf to reclaim them. Shortly after his death, Pilate wrote to Tiberius an account of his paſſion, reſurrection, and miracles; upon which the emperor made a report of the whole

to

to the ſenate, deſiring that Chriſt might be accounted a God by the Romans. But the ſenate being diſpleaſed that the propoſal had not come firſt from themſelves, refuſed to allow of his apotheoſis; alledging an ancient law, which gave them the ſuperintendance in all matters of religion. They even went ſo far as, by an edict, to command, that all Chriſtians ſhould leave the city; but Tiberius, by another edict, threatened death to all ſuch as ſhould accuſe them; by which means they continued unmoleſted during the reſt of his reign.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

CALIGULA, the Fourth EMPEROR of Rome.

NO monarch ever came to the throne with more advantages than Caligula. He was the ſon of Germanicus, who had been the darling of the army and the people. He was bred among the ſoldiers, from whom he received the name of Caligula, from the ſhort buſkin, called Caliga, that was worn by the common ſentinels, and which was alſo uſually worn by him. He ſucceeded a mercileſs tyrant; after whom, even moderate merit would look like excellence. Wherefore, as he approached Rome, the principal men of the ſtate went out in crowds to meet him. He received the congratulations of the people on every ſide, all equally pleaſed in being free from the cruelties of Tiberius, and in hoping new advantages from the virtues of his ſucceſſor.

Caligula ſeemed to take every precaution, to impreſs them with the opinion of an happy change. Amidſt the rejoicings of the multitude, he advanced, mourning, with the dead body of Tiberius, which the ſoldiers brought to be burnt at Rome, according to the cuſtom of

of that time. Upon his entrance into the city he was received with new titles of honour by the ſenate, whoſe chief employment ſeemed now to be, the art of encreaſing the emperor's vanity. He was left coheir with Gemellus, grandſon to Tiberius; but they ſet aſide the nomination, and declared Caligula ſole ſucceſſor to the empire. The joy for this election was not confined to the narrow bounds of Italy, it ſpread through the whole empire, and victims without number were ſacrificed upon the occaſion. Some of the people, upon his going into the iſland of Campania, made vows for his return; and ſhortly after, when he fell ſick, the multitude crowded whole nights round his palace, and ſome even devoted themſelves to death, in caſe he recovered, ſetting up bills of their reſolution in the ſtreets. In this affection of the citizens, ſtrangers themſelves ſeemed ambitious of ſharing. Artabanus, king of Parthia, who took every method of contemning his predeceſſor, ſought the preſent emperor's alliance with aſſiduity. He came to a perſonal conference with one of his legates: he paſſed the Euphrates, he adored the Roman eagles, and kiſſed the emperor's images; ſo that the whole world ſeemed combined to praiſe him for virtues, which their hopes, and not their experience had given him.

Thus

Thus all the enormities of this emperor were concealed in the beginning of his reign. He, at firſt, ſeemed extremely careful of the public; and having performed the funeral ſolemnities of Tiberius, he haſtened to the iſlands of Pandataria and Ponti, to remove the aſhes of his mother and brothers, expoſing himſelf to the danger of tempeſtuous weather, to give a luſtre to his piety. Having brought them to Rome, he ordained annual ſolemnities in their honour, and ordered the month of September to be called Germanicus, in memory of his father. Theſe ceremonies being over, he conferred the ſame honours upon his grandmother Antonia, which had before been given to Livia; and ordered all informations to be burnt, that any ways expoſed the enemies of his family. He even refuſed a paper that was offered him, tending to the diſcovery of a conſpiracy againſt himſelf; alledging, That he was conſcious of nothing to deſerve any man's hatred, and, therefore, had no fears from their machinations. He cauſed the inſtitutions of Auguſtus, which had been diſuſed in the reign of Tiberius to be revived; he undertook to reform many abuſes in the ſtate, and ſeverely puniſhed corrupt governours. Among others he baniſhed Pontius Pilate into Gaul, where this unjuſt magiſtrate afterwards put an end to his life by ſuicide. He ſtrictly inſpected the behaviour

of the knights, whom he publickly degraded upon being found guilty of an infamous crime.

He baniſhed without remiſſion, the Spintriæ, or inventors of abominable recreations, from Rome. He attempted to reſtore the ancient manner of electing magiſtrates by the ſuffrages of the people, and gave them a free juriſdiction, without any appeal to himſelf. Although the will of Tiberius was annulled by the ſenate, and that of Livia ſuppreſſed by Tiberius, yet he cauſed all their legacies to be punctually paid; and in order to make Gemellus amends for miſſing the crown, he cauſed him to be elected Princeps Juventutis, or Principal of the Youth. He reſtored ſome kings to their dominions, who had been unjuſtly diſpoſſeſſed by Tiberius, and gave them the arrears of their revenues. And that he might appear an encourager of every virtue, he ordered a female ſlave a large ſum of money for enduring the moſt exquiſite torments, without diſcovering the ſecrets of her maſter. So many conceſſions, and ſuch apparent virtue, could not fail of receiving juſt applauſe. A ſhield of gold, bearing his image, was decreed to be carried annually to the Capitol, attended by the ſenate, and the ſons of the nobility, ſinging in praiſe of the emperor's virtues. It was likewiſe ordained, that the day on which he was appointed to the empire ſhould be called Pubitia;

bitia, implying, that when he came to govern, the city received a new foundation.

But it had been happy for him and the empire, had ſuch a beginning been as ſtrenuouſly maintained. In leſs than eight months all this ſhow of moderation and clemency vaniſhed, while furious paſſions, unexampled avarice, and capricious cruelty, began to take their turn in his mind. As moſt of the cruelties of Tiberius aroſe from ſuſpicion, ſo moſt of thoſe committed by Caligula took riſe from prodigality. Some, indeed, pretend to aſſert that a diſorder which happened ſoon after his acceſſion to the empire, entirely diſtorted his reaſon, and diſcompoſed his underſtanding. However this may be, madneſs itſelf could ſcarcely dictate cruelties more extravagant, inconſiſtencies more ridiculous than are imputed to him; ſome of them appear almoſt beyond belief, as they ſeem entirely without any motive to incite to ſuch barbarities.

The firſt object of his cruelty, and one that will ſcarcely be regretted by poſterity, was a perſon named Politus, who had devoted himſelf to death, in caſe the emperor, who was then ſick, ſhould recover. When Caligula's health was re-eſtabliſhed, he was informed of the zeal of Politus, and actually compelled him to complete his vow. This ridiculous devotee was, therefore, led round the city, by

children, adorned with chaplets, and then put to death, being thrown headlong from the ramparts. Another, named Secundus, had vowed to fight in the amphitheatre upon the ſame occaſion. To this he was alſo compelled, the emperor himſelf chooſing to be a ſpectator of the combat. However, he was more fortunate than the former, being ſo ſucceſsful as to kill his adverſary, by which he obtained a releaſe from his vow. Gemellus was the next who ſuffered from the tyrant's inhumanity. The pretence againſt him was, that he had wiſhed the emperor might not recover; and that he had taken a counter-poiſon to ſecure him from any ſecret attempts againſt his life. Caligula ordered him to kill himſelf; but as the unfortunate youth was ignorant of the manner of doing it, the emperor's meſſengers ſoon inſtructed him in the fatal leſſon. Silenus, the emperor's father-in-law, was the next who was put to death upon ſlight ſuſpicions; and Grecinus, a ſenator of noted integrity, refuſing to witneſs falſely againſt him, ſhared his fate. After, followed a crowd of victims to the emperor's avarice or ſuſpicion. The pretext againſt them was their enmity to his family; and in proof of his accuſations he produced thoſe very memorials, which but a while before he pretended to have burnt. Among the number of thoſe who were ſacrificed to his jealouſy, was Macro, the late favourite of

Tiberius,

Tiberius, and the perſon to whom Caligula owed his empire. He was accuſed of many crimes, ſome of which were common to the emperor, as well as to him, and his death brought on the ruin of that favourite's whole family.

Theſe cruelties, however, only ſeemed the firſt fruits of a mind naturally timid and ſuſpicious: his vanity and profuſion ſoon gave riſe to others which were more atrocious, as they ſprung from leſs powerful motives. His pride firſt appeared by aſſuming to himſelf the title of ruler, which was uſually granted only to kings. He would alſo have taken the crown and diadem, had he not been adviſed that he was already ſuperior to all the monarchs of the world. Not long after he aſſumed divine honours, and gave himſelf the names of ſuch divinities as he thought moſt agreeable to his nature. For this purpoſe he cauſed the heads of the ſtatues of Jupiter and ſome other gods to be ſtruck off, and his own to be put in their places. He frequently ſeated himſelf between Caſtor and Pollux, and ordered that all who came to their temple to worſhip, ſhould pay their adorations only to him. However, ſuch was the extravagant inconſtancy of this unaccountable ideot, that he changed his divinity as often as he changed his clothes. Being at one time a male deity, at another a female; ſometimes Jupiter or Mars, and not unfrequently Venus or Diana.

He even built and dedicated a temple to his own divinity, in which his ſtatue of gold was every day dreſſed in ſimilar robes to thoſe which he himſelf wore, and was worſhipped by crowds of adorers. His prieſts were numerous, the ſacrifices made to him were of the moſt exquiſite delicacies that could be procured, and the dignity of the prieſthood was ſought by the moſt opulent men of the city. However, he admitted his wife and horſe to that honour; and, to give a finiſhing ſtroke to his abſurdities, he became a prieſt to himſelf. His method of aſſuming the manners of a deity was not leſs ridiculous: he often went out in the full moon, and courted it in the ſtyle of a lover. He often invited it to his bed, to taſte the pleaſure of his embraces. He employed many inventions to imitate thunder, and would frequently defy Jupiter, crying out with a ſpeech of Homer, "Do "you conquer me, or I will conquer you." He frequently pretended to converſe in whiſpers with the ſtatue of Jupiter, and uſually ſeemed angry at its replies, threatening to ſend it packing into Greece. Sometimes, however, he would aſſume a better temper, and ſeemed contented that they two ſhould dwell together in amity.

A perſon ſo impious reſpecting the Deity, was ſtill more criminal with regard to man. He was not leſs notorious for the depravation of

of his appetites, than for his ridiculous preſumptions. Neither perſon, place, nor ſex, were obſtacles to the indulgence of his unnatural luſts. There was ſcarce a lady of any quality in Rome that eſcaped his lewdneſs; and, indeed, ſuch was the degeneracy of the times, that there were few ladies then who did not think this diſgrace an honour. He committed inceſt with his three ſiſters, and at public feaſts they lay with their heads upon his boſom by turns. Of theſe he proſtituted Livia and Agrippina to his vile companions, and then baniſhed them as adultereſſes and conſpirators againſt his perſon. As for Druſilla, he took her from her huſband Longinus, and kept her as his wife. Her he loved ſo affectionately, that being ſick, he appointed her heireſs of his empire and fortune; and ſhe happening to die before him he made her a goddeſs. Nor did her example, when living, appear more dangerous to the people than her divinity, when dead. To mourn for her death was a crime, as ſhe was become a goddeſs; and to rejoice for her deity, was capital, becauſe ſhe was dead. Nay, even ſilence itſelf was an unpardonable inſenſibility, either of the emperor's loſs or his ſiſter's advancement. Thus he made his ſiſter ſubſervient to his profit, as before he had done to his pleaſure; raiſing vaſt ſums of money by granting pardons to ſome, and by confiſcating the

goods of others. As to his marriages, whether he contracted them with greater levity, or diſſolved them with greater injuſtice, is not eaſy to determine. Being preſent at the nuptials of Livia Oriſtilla with Piſo, as ſoon as the ſolemnity was over, he commanded her to be brought to him as his own wife, and then diſmiſſed her in a few days. He ſoon after went ſo far as to baniſh her upon ſuſpicion of cohabiting with her huſband after ſhe was parted from him. He was enamoured of Lollia Paulina, upon a bare relation of her grandmother's beauty, and thereupon took her from her huſband, who commanded in Macedonia; notwithſtanding which he repudiated her as he had done the former, and likewiſe forbade her future marrying with any other. The wife who caught his affections moſt was Milonia Cæſonia, whoſe chief merit lay in her perfect acquaintance with all the alluring arts of her ſex, for ſhe was otherwiſe poſſeſſed neither of youth nor beauty. She continued with him during his reign, and he loved her ſo ridiculouſly, that he ſometimes ſhowed her to his ſoldiers dreſt in armour, and ſometimes to his companions ſtark naked; ſo that his very regard was a reproach to thoſe whom he wiſhed to oblige.

His envy was ſtill more deteſtable than his luſts. We are told that he put Caius to death for no other crime, than becauſe he wore a purple

purple gown, the luſtre of which called off all the regards of the ſpectators from himſelf. He ordered ſeveral perſons in the city to be ſhaved, for having hair more beautiful than ordinary. He ordered one Proculus, who was remarkable for his beauty and the tallneſs of his ſtature, to deſcend into the amphitheatre, and to fight among the combatants as a gladiator. Proculus came off victorious, having vanquiſhed two men one after the other. However, the tyrant was not ſatisfied with this puniſhment, but cauſed him to be bound and clothed in rags, and then to be led round the city and ſlain. Being preſent at the public games, where a particular gladiator ſucceeded with more than ordinary applauſe, he was ſo highly diſpleaſed that he flung himſelf out of the amphitheatre in a fury, crying out with great indignation, that the Romans gave more honour to a pitiful fencer, than to the emperor himſelf.

But of all his vices, his prodigality was the moſt remarkable, and that which in ſome meaſure gave riſe to the reſt. The luxuries of former emperors were ſimplicity itſelf, when compared to thoſe which he practiſed. He contrived new ways of bathing, where the richeſt oils and moſt precious perfumes were exhauſted with the utmoſt profuſion. He found out diſhes of immenſe value, and had even jewels, as we are told, diſſolved among his ſauces.

ſauces. He ſometimes had ſervices of pure gold preſented before his gueſts inſtead of meat; obſerving, That a man ſhould be an œconomiſt or an emperor.

The expenſive manner in which he maintained his horſe, will give ſome idea of his domeſtick œconomy. He built it a ſtable of marble, and a manger of ivory. Whenever this animal, which he called Incitatus, was to run, he placed ſentinels near its ſtable the night preceding, to prevent its ſlumbers from being broken. He appointed it an houſe, furniture, and a kitchen, in order to treat all its viſitors with proper reſpect. The emperor ſometimes invited Incitatus to his own table, preſented it with gilt oats, and wine in a golden cup. He often ſwore by the ſafety of his horſe, and it is ſaid he would have appointed it to the conſulſhip had he not been prevented by death.

For ſeveral days together he flung conſiderable ſums of money among the people. He ordered ſhips of a prodigious bulk to be built of cedar, the ſterns of ivory inlaid with gold and jewels, the ſails and tackling of various ſilks, while the decks were planted with the choiceſt fruit-trees, under the ſhade of which he often dined. There, attended by all the miniſters of his pleaſures, the moſt exquiſite ſingers, and the moſt beautiful youths, he coaſted along the ſhore of Campania with great ſplen-

dour. All his buildings ſeemed rather calculated to raiſe aſtoniſhment, than to anſwer the purpoſes of utility. He ordered houſes to be built in the ſea; he cut his way through rocks of prodigious bulk; he levelled mountains, and elevated plains and valleys. But the moſt notorious inſtance of his fruitleſs profuſion was the vaſt bridge at Puteoli, which he undertook in the third year of his reign. To ſatisfy his deſire of being maſter as well of the ocean as the land, he cauſed an infinite number of ſhips to be faſtened to each other, ſo as to make a floating bridge from Baia to Puteoli, acroſs an arm of the ſea three miles and an half broad. The ſhips being placed in two rows, in form of a creſcent, were ſecured to each other with anchors, chains, and cables. Over theſe were laid vaſt quantities of timber, and upon them earth, ſo as to make the whole reſemble one of the ſtreets of Rome. He next cauſed ſeveral houſes to be built upon his new bridge, for the reception of himſelf and his attendants, into which freſh water was conveyed by pipes from the land. He then repaired thither with all his court, attended by prodigious throngs of people, who came from all parts to be ſpectators of ſuch an expenſive pageant. It was there that Caligula, adorned with all the magnificence of eaſtern royalty, ſitting on horſeback with a civic crown, and Alexander's breaſt-plate, attended by

by the great officers of the army, and all the nobility of Rome, entered at one end of the bridge, and with ridiculous importance rode to the other. At night, the number of torches and other illumuinations with which this expenſive ſtructure was adorned, caſt ſuch a gleam as illuminated the whole bay, and all the neighbouring mountains. This ſeemed to give the weak emperor new cauſe for exultation, boaſting, that he had turned night into day, as well as ſea into land. The next morning he again rode over in a triumphant chariot, followed by a numerous train of charioteers, and all his ſoldiers in glittering armour. He then aſcended a roſtrum erected for the occaſion, where he made a ſolemn oration in praiſe of the greatneſs of his enterpriſe, and the aſſiduity of his workmen and his army. He then diſtributed rewards among his men, and a ſplendid feaſt ſucceeded. However, there was ſtill wanting ſomething to mark the diſpoſition of the mighty projector. In the midſt of the entertainment many of his attendants were thrown into the ſea; ſeveral ſhips, filled with ſpectators, were attacked and ſunk in an hoſtile manner; and, although the majority eſcaped through the calmneſs of the weather, yet many were drowned; and ſome, who endeavoured to ſave themſelves by climbing to the bridge, were ſtruck down again by the emperor's command. The

calmneſs

calmneſs of the ſea during this pageant, which continued two days, furniſhed Caligula with freſh opportunities for boaſting; being heard to ſay, "That Neptune took care to keep the "ſea ſmooth and ſerene, merely out of reve-"rence to him."

Expences like theſe, it may naturally be ſuppoſed, muſt have exhauſted the moſt unbounded wealth: in fact, after reigning about a year, Caligula found his revenues totally exhauſted; and a fortune of about eighteen millions of our money, which Tiberius had amaſſed together, entirely ſpent in extravagance and folly. His prodigality, therefore, put him upon new methods of ſupplying his expences; and, as before, his profuſion, ſo now his rapacity became boundleſs. He put in practice all kinds of rapine and extortion; while his principal ſtudy ſeemed to be the inventing new impoſts, and illicit confiſcation. Every thing was taxed, to the very wages of the meaneſt tradeſman. He cauſed freemen to purchaſe their freedom a ſecond time; and poiſoned many who had named him for their heir, to have the immediate poſſeſſion of their fortunes. He ſet up a brothel in his own palace, by which he gained conſiderable ſums by all the methods of proſtitution. He alſo kept a gaming-houſe, in which he preſided, ſcrupling none of the mean tricks of that reptile race, in order to advance his

gains. On a certain occaſion, having had a run of ill-luck, he ſaw two rich knights paſſing through his court; upon which he ſuddenly roſe up, and cauſing both to be apprehended, confiſcated their eſtates, and then joining his former companions, boaſted that he never had a better throw in his life. Another time, wanting money for a ſtake, he went down, and cauſed ſeveral noblemen to be put to death, and then returning, told the company, That they ſate playing for trifles, while he had won ſixty thouſand ſeſterces at a caſt. Having had a daughter born, he complained openly of his poverty, and publiſhed an edict that he would receive whatever preſents ſhould be ſent him, and actually ſtood in the portico of his palace, to induce the people to be liberal in their donations.

Theſe methods, however, were but ſubordinate to the cruelties by which he acquired immenſe ſums. He ſlew many of the ſenate, and afterwards cited them to appear as if they had killed themſelves. He condemned many perſons of the higheſt quality to dig in the mines, and to repair the highways, for offering to ridicule his profuſion. He caſt great numbers of old and infirm men and poor decrepid houſekeepers to wild beaſts, to free the ſtate from ſuch unſerviceable citizens. He uſually fed his wild beaſts with the bodies of

thoſe wretches whom he condemned; and every tenth day, ſent off numbers of them to be thus devoured; which he jocoſely called, Clearing his accounts. One of thoſe who was thus expoſed crying out that he was innocent, Caligula ordered his tongue to be cut out, and then thrown into the amphitheatre as before. He took delight in killing men with ſlow tortures, that, as he expreſſed it, they might feel themſelves dying; being always preſent at ſuch executions, himſelf directing the duration of the puniſhment, and mitigating the tortures, merely to prolong them. In fact, he valued himſelf for no quality more than this unrelenting temper, and inflexible ſeverity, which he preſerved while preſiding at an execution.

His barbarous attempts at wit in the midſt of ſlaughter, ſufficiently evince what little pain he felt from compaſſion. An eminent citizen, who for an indiſpoſition had got leave to retire into the iſland of Anticyra, which was a place famous for curing madneſs by hellebore, deſiring to have his ſtay prolonged, Caligula ordered him to be put to death; adding, with a ſmile, That bleeding muſt certainly be uſeful to one who had ſo long taken hellebore without ſucceſs. Once, putting a wrong perſon to death by miſtake, upon finding his error, he ſaid it was well done, for this criminal had doubtleſs deſerved to die as well as the other. This horrid

diſpoſition

diſpoſition never forſook him, even in the moſt feſtive hours: he frequently had men racked before him while he ſate at meat, ironically pitying their misfortunes, and blaming their executioner. He always deſired to have the friends and relations of the ſufferer to be preſent at theſe executions. Upon a certain occaſion, one of them excuſing himſelf upon account of ſickneſs, the tyrant ſent a litter to carry him. Whenever he kiſſed his wife or miſtreſs, he generally laid his hand on her neck, obſerving, that, however ſmooth and lovely it was, he could take it off when he pleaſed. Demanding of one whom he had recalled from baniſhment, how he employed himſelf in his exile; being told that he had prayed for the death of Tiberius, Caligula immediately concluding that all whom himſelf had baniſhed, wiſhed for his death likewiſe, commanded that all exiles ſhould be ſlain without mercy. At one time, being incenſed with the citizens of Rome, he wiſhed that all the Roman people had but one neck, that he might diſpatch them at a blow.

Such inſupportable and capricious cruelties produced many ſecret conſpiracies againſt him; but theſe were for awhile deferred, upon account of his intended expedition againſt the Germans and Britons, which he undertook in the third year of his reign. For this purpoſe, he cauſed numerous levies to be made in all

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parts

parts of the empire, and talked with ſo much reſolution, that it was univerſally believed he would conquer all before him. His march perfectly indicated the inequality of his temper: ſometimes it was ſo rapid that the cohorts were obliged to leave their ſtandards behind them; at other times it was ſo ſlow, that it more reſembled a pompous proceſſion than a military expedition. In this diſpoſition he cauſed himſelf to be carried on eight men's ſhoulders, and ordered all the neighbouring cities to have their ſtreets well ſwept and watered, to defend him from the duſt. However, all theſe mighty preparations ended in nothing. Inſtead of conquering Britain, he only gave refuge to one of its baniſhed princes; and this he deſcribed, in his letter to the ſenate, as taking poſſeſſion of the whole iſland. Inſtead of conquering Germany, he led his army to the ſea-ſhore; there, diſpoſing his engines and warlike machines with great ſolemnity, and drawing up the men in order of battle, he went on board his galley, with which coaſting along, he commanded his trumpets to ſound, and the ſignal to be given as if for an engagement; upon which his men, having had previous orders, immediately began to gather the ſhells that lay upon the ſhore into their helmets, terming them the ſpoils of the conquered ocean, worthy of the palace and the Capitol. After this doughty expedi-

tion, calling his army together, as a general after victory, he harangued them in a pompous manner, and highly extolled their atchievements; and then distributing money among them, dismissed them with orders to be joyful, and congratulated them upon their riches. But that such exploits should not pass without a memorial, he caused a lofty tower to be erected by the sea-side, and ordered the gallies in which he had put to sea, to be conveyed to Rome, in a great measure, by land.

After numberless instances of folly and cruelty in this expedition, among which he had intentions of destroying the whole army, that had formerly mutinied under his father Germanicus, he began to think of a triumph. The senate, who had long been the timid ministers of his pride and cruelty, immediately set about consulting how to satisfy his expectations. They considered that a triumph would, even to himself, appear as a burlesque upon his expedition: they, therefore, decreed him only an ovation. Having come to this resolution, they sent him a deputation, informing him of the honours granted him, and the decree, which was drawn up in terms of the most extravagant adulation. However, their flattery was far from satisfying his pride. He considered their conduct rather as a diminution of his power, than an addition to his glory. He therefore ordered them,

them, on pain of death, not to concern themſelves with his honours; and being met by their meſſengers on the way, who invited him to partake of the preparations which the ſenate had decreed, he informed them that he would ſoon be at Rome; and then laying his hand upon his ſword, added, That he would bring that with him. In this manner, either quite omitting his triumph, or deferring it to another time, he entered the city only with an ovation: while the ſenate paſſed the whole day in acclamations in his praiſe, and ſpeeches filled with the moſt exceſſive flattery. This conduct, in ſome meaſure, ſerved to reconcile him; and ſoon after, their exceſſive zeal in his cauſe entirely gained his favour. For it happened that Protogenes, who was one of the moſt intimate, and the moſt cruel of his favourites, coming into the houſe, was fawned upon by the whole body of the ſenate, and particularly by Proculus. Whereupon Protogenes, with a fierce look, aſked how one who was ſuch an enemy to the emperor could be ſuch a friend to him? There needed no more to excite the ſenate againſt Proculus. They inſtantly ſeized upon him, and violently tore him in pieces; plainly ſhewing by their conduct, that tyranny in the prince produces cruelty in thoſe whom he governs.

It was after returning from his extravagant expedition, that he was waited on by a deputation

tation from the Jews of Alexandria, who came to deprecate his anger for not worſhipping his divinity as other nations had done. He was employed in looking over ſome houſes of pleaſure, and giving directions to the workmen, when Philo, the Jew, and the reſt of the embaſſy, were admitted to an audience. Upon their approaching him with the moſt profound humility, he began by calling them enemies to the gods, and by aſking them how they could refuſe to acknowledge his divinity? Upon their replying that they had ſacrificed hecatombs, both upon his acceſſion to the empire, and his recovery from ſickneſs, he replied, That thoſe ſacrifices were offered not to him, but for him. In the mean time, while they continued ſilently aſtoniſhed at his impiety, he went from room to room, giving directions to his workmen concerning new improvements, and remarking ſuch parts of the furniture as happened to diſpleaſe him. He would now and then ſtop to aſk ſome extravagant queſtions: "What can be the "reaſon (cried he) that you Jews abſtain from "pork?" This queſtion ſeemed ſo very lively to his attendants, that they burſt into ſuch loud fits of laughter, as obliged an officer who was preſent to reprimand them. Philo was willing to give him all the information he was able upon this head, and began by ſaying, That different nations had different cuſtoms; that,

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while the people of one religion abſtained from pork, thoſe of another never eat lamb. "Nor "do I blame them (cried Caligula) for lamb "is very bad eating. But tell me (continued "he) what pretenſions have you to be citizens "of Alexandria?" Upon this, Philo began to enter into the buſineſs of his embaſſy; but he had ſcarce commenced, when Caligula abruptly left him, and ran into a large hall, the windows of which he ordered to be adorned with tranſparent ſtone, which was uſed by the ancients inſtead of glaſs. He then returned to the deputies, and aſſuming a more moderate air. "Well (cried he) let me know what you "have to ſay in your defence." Philo began his harangue where it had been interrupted before; but Caligula again left him in the midſt of it, and gave orders for placing ſome pictures. Nothing can be a more ſtriking repreſentation than this, of the manner in which this monſter attended to the complaints of mankind. The affair of the Jews remained undecided during his reign; but it was at laſt ſettled by his ſucceſſor to their ſatisfaction. It was upon this occaſion, that Philo made the following remarkable anſwer to his aſſociates, who were terrified with apprehenſions from the emperor's indignation: "Fear nothing (cried he to "them) Caligula, by declaring againſt us, puts "God on our ſide."

The continuation of this horrid reign ſeemed to threaten univerſal calamity: however, it was as ſhort as it deſerved to be. There had already been ſeveral conſpiracies formed to deſtroy the tyrant, but without ſucceſs. That which at laſt ſucceeded, in delivering the world of this monſter, was concerted under the influence of Caſſius Cherea, tribune of the prætorian bands. He was a man of experienced courage; an ardent admirer of freedom; and, conſequently, an enemy to tyrants. Beſides the motives which he had in common with other men, he had received repeated inſults from Caligula, who took all occaſions of turning him into ridicule, and impeaching him of cowardice, merely becauſe he happened to have an effeminate voice. Whenever Cherea came to demand the watch-word from the emperor, according to cuſtom, he always gave him either Venus, Adonis, or ſome ſuch, implying effeminacy and ſoftneſs. He therefore ſecretly imparted his deſigns to ſeveral ſenators and knights, whom he knew to have received perſonal injuries from Caligula, or to be apprehenſive of thoſe to come. Among the reſt was Valerius Aſiaticus, whoſe wife the emperor had debauched. Annius Vinicianus alſo, who was ſuſpected of having been in a former conſpiracy, was deſirous of really engaging in the firſt deſign that offered. Beſides theſe, were Clemens, the præfect; and

Caliſtus, whoſe riches made him obnoxious to the tyrant's reſentment.

While theſe were deliberating upon the moſt certain and ſpeedy method of deſtroying the tyrant, an unexpected incident gave new ſtrength to the conſpiracy. Pompedius, a ſenator of diſtinction, having been accuſed before the emperor, of having ſpoken of him with diſreſpect, the informer cited one Quintilia, an actreſs, to confirm his accuſation. Quintilia, however, was poſſeſſed of a degree of fortitude not eaſily found, even in the other ſex. She denied the fact with obſtinacy; and being put to the torture, at the informer's requeſt, ſhe bore the ſevereſt torment of the rack with unſhaken conſtancy. But what is moſt remarkable of her reſolution is, that ſhe was acquainted with all the particulars of the conſpiracy; and, although Cherea was the perſon appointed to preſide at her torture, ſhe revealed nothing: on the contrary, when ſhe was led to the rack, ſhe trod upon the toe of one of the conſpirators, intimating at once her knowledge of the confederacy, and her own reſolution not to divulge it. In this manner ſhe ſuffered, until all her limbs were diſlocated; and, in that deplorable ſtate, was preſented to the emperor, who ordered her a gratuity for what ſhe had ſuffered. Cherea could now no longer

contain his indignation, at being thus made the inſtrument of a tyrant's cruelty. He therefore propoſed to the conſpirators to attack him as he went to offer ſacrifices in the capitol; or while he was employed in the ſecret pleaſures of his palace. The reſt, however, were of opinion, that it was beſt to fall upon him when he ſhould be unattended; by which means they would be more certain of their ſucceſs. After ſeveral deliberations, it was at laſt reſolved to attack him during the continuance of the Palatine games, which laſted four days; and to ſtrike the blow when his guards ſhould have the leaſt opportunity to defend him. In conſequence of this, the three firſt days of the games paſſed, without affording that opportunity which was ſo ardently deſired. Cherea now, therefore, began to apprehend, that deferring the completion of the conſpiracy might be a means to divulge it: he even began to dread, that the honour of killing the tyrant might fall to the lot of ſome other perſon, more bold than himſelf. Wherefore, he at laſt reſolved to defer the execution of his plot only to the day following, when Caligula ſhould paſs through a private gallery, to ſome baths, not far diſtant from the palace.

The laſt day of the games was more ſplendid than the reſt; and Caligula ſeemed more ſprightly

ſprightly and condeſcending than uſual. He took great amuſement in ſeeing the people ſcramble for the fruits, and other rarities, thrown, by his order, among them; and ſeemed no way apprehenſive of the plot formed for his deſtruction. In the mean time, the conſpiracy began to tranſpire; and, had he had any friends left, it could not fail of being diſcovered. A ſenator, who was preſent, aſking one of his acquaintance if he had heard any thing new, the other replying in the negative, "Then you muſt "know (ſays he) that this day will be repre- "ſented the death of a tyrant." The other immediately underſtood him, but deſired him to be more cautious how he divulged a ſecret of ſo much importance. The conſpirators waited a great part of the day with the moſt extreme anxiety; and, at one time, Caligula ſeemed reſolved to ſpend the whole day without any refreſhment. This unexpected delay entirely exaſperated Cherea; and, had he not been reſtrained, he would have gone and perpetrated his deſign in the midſt of all the people. Juſt at that inſtant, while he was yet heſitating what he ſhould do, Aſprenas, one of the conſpirators, perſuaded Caligula to go to the bath, and take ſome ſlight refreſhment, in order to enjoy the reſt of the entertainment with greater reliſh. The emperor, therefore, riſing up, the conſpirators

ſpirators uſed every precaution to keep off the throng, and to ſurround him, under pretence of greater aſſiduity. Upon entering into the little vaulted gallery that led to the bath, he was met by a band of Grecian children, who had been inſtructed in ſinging, and were come to perform in his preſence. He was once more, therefore, going to return into the theatre with them, had not the leader of the band excuſed himſelf, as having a cold. This was the moment which Cherea ſeiſed to ſtrike him to the ground; crying out, "Tyrant, think upon this." Immediately after, the other conſpirators ruſhed in; and, while the emperor continued to reſiſt, crying out, that he was not yet dead, they diſpatched him with thirty wounds.

Such was the merited death of Caius Caligula, in the twenty-ninth year of his age, after a ſhort reign of three years, ten months, and eight days. It will be unneceſſary to add any thing more to his character, than what Seneca ſays of him: namely, That nature ſeemed to have brought him forth, to ſhow what was poſſible to be produced, from the greateſt vice ſupported by the greateſt authority. His wit and eloquence are applauded by ſome: but what could be his taſte in either, who condemned Virgil as a bad poet, and Livy as a wretched hiſtorian? With him his wife and infant

infant daughter alſo periſhed, the one being ſtabbed by a centurion, the other having its brains daſhed out againſt the wall. His money alſo was melted down by a decree of the ſenate; and ſuch precautions were taken, that all ſeemed willing, that neither his features nor his name might be tranſmitted to poſterity.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

CLAUDIUS, the Fifth EMPEROR of ROME.

U C. 794. A.D. 42. AS ſoon as the death of Caligula was made public, it produced the greateſt confuſion in all parts of the city. The conſpirators, who only aimed at deſtroying a tyrant, without attending to a ſucceſſor, had all ſought ſafety by retiring to private places. Some thought the report of the emperor's death was only an artifice of his own, to ſee how his enemies would behave. Others averred, that he was ſtill alive, and actually in a fair way to recover. In this interval of torturing ſuſpence, the German guards, finding it a convenient time to pillage, gave a looſe to their licentiouſneſs, under a pretence of revenging the emperor's death. All the conſpirators and ſenators who fell in their way received no mercy; Aſprenas, Norbanus, and Anteius, were cut in pieces. However, their rage at length wanting an object, and their ſervice a maſter, they grew calm by degrees: and the ſenate was permitted to aſſemble in order to deliberate upon what

was

was neceſſary to be done in the preſent emergency.

In this deliberation, Saturninus, who was then conſul, inſiſted much upon the benefits of liberty, and talked in raptures of Cherea's fortitude, alledging that it deſerved the nobleſt reward. This was a language highly pleaſing to the ſenate, who being long harraſſed by the cruelty of tyrants, panted once more for the reſtoration of their former freedom. Liberty now became the favourite topick; and they even ventured to talk of extinguiſhing the name of Cæſar. Impreſſed with this generous reſolution, they brought over ſome cohorts of the city to their ſide, and boldly ſeiſed upon the Capitol. But it was now too late for Rome to regain her priſtine freedom, as the populace and the army oppoſed their endeavours. The former were ſtill mindful of their ancient hatred to the ſenate, and remembered the donations and public ſpectacles of the emperors with regret. The latter were ſenſible they could have no power but in a monarchy, and had ſome hopes that the election of the emperor would fall to their determination. In this oppoſition of intereſt, and variety of opinions, chance ſeemed at laſt to decide the fate of the empire. Some ſoldiers happening to run about the palace, diſcovered Claudius, Caligula's uncle, lurking in a ſecret place, where he had hid himſelf through fear.

fear. Of this perſonage, who had hitherto been deſpiſed for his imbecility, they reſolved to make an emperor; and accordingly carried him upon their ſhoulders to the camp, where they proclaimed him, at a time he expected nothing but death.

The ſenate, perceiving that force alone was likely to ſettle the ſucceſſion, were reſolved to ſubmit, ſince they had no power to oppoſe. Claudius was the perſon moſt nearly allied to the late emperor, then living, being the nephew of Tiberius, and the uncle of Caligula. The ſenate, therefore, paſſed a decree, confirming him in the empire; and went ſoon after in a body, to render him their compulſive homage. Cherea was the firſt who fell a ſacrifice to the jealouſy of this new monarch. He met death with all the fortitude of an ancient Roman, deſiring to die by the ſame ſword with which he had killed Caligula. Lupus, his friend, was put to death with him; and Sabinus, one of the conſpirators, laid violent hands on himſelf.

Claudius was fifty years old, when he began to reign. The complicated diſeaſes of his infancy, had, in ſome meaſure, affected all the faculties both of his body and mind. He was continued in a ſtate of pupilage much longer than was uſual at that time; and ſeemed, in every part of life, incapable of conducting himſelf.

himſelf. Not that he was entirely deſtitute of underſtanding, ſince he had made a tolerable proficiency in the Greek and Latin languages, and even wrote an hiſtory of his own time; which, however deſtitute of other merit, was not contemptible in point of ſtyle. Nevertheleſs with this ſhare of erudition, he was unable to advance himſelf in the ſtate, and ſeemed utterly neglected, till he was placed all at once at the head of affairs.

The commencement of his reign, as it was with all the other bad emperors, gave the moſt promiſing hopes of an happy continuance. He began by paſſing an act of oblivion for all former words and actions, and diſannulled all the cruel edicts of Caligula. He ſhowed himſelf more moderate than his predeceſſors with regard to titles and honours. He forbad all perſons upon ſevere penalties, to ſacrifice to him, as they had done to Caligula. He was aſſiduous in hearing and examining complaints; and frequently adminiſtered juſtice in perſon; tempering, by his mildneſs, the ſeverity of ſtrict juſtice. We are told of his bringing a woman to acknowledge her ſon, by adjudging her to marry him. The tribunes of the people coming one day to attend him, when he was on his tribunal, he courteouſly excuſed himſelf, for not having room for them to ſit down. By this deportment he ſo much gained the affections of the

the people, that upon a vague report of his being ſlain by ſurpriſe, they ran about the ſtreets, in the utmoſt rage and conſternation, with horrid imprecations againſt all ſuch as were acceſſary to his death, nor could they be appeaſed, till they were aſſured of his ſafety. He took a more than ordinary care that Rome ſhould be continually ſupplied with corn and proviſions, ſecuring the merchants againſt pirates. He was not leſs aſſiduous in his buildings, in which he excelled almoſt all who went before him. He conſtructed a wonderful aqueduct, called after his own name, much ſurpaſſing any other in Rome, either for workmanſhip, or plentiful ſupply. It brought water from forty miles diſtance, through great mountains, and over deep vallies, being built on ſtately arches, and furniſhing the higheſt parts of the city. He made alſo an haven at Oſtia; a work of ſuch immenſe expence, that his ſucceſſors were unable to maintain it. But his greateſt work of all was the draining the lake Fucinus, which was the largeſt in Italy, and bringing its water into the Tyber, in order to ſtrengthen the current of that river. For effecting this, among other vaſt difficulties, he mined through a mountain of ſtone, three miles broad, and kept thirty thouſand men employed for eleven years together.

To this ſollicitude for the internal advantages of the ſtate, he added that of a watchful guardianſhip over the provinces. He reſtored Judea to Herod Agrippa, which Caligula had taken from Herod Antipas, his uncle, who had put John the Baptiſt to death, and who was baniſhed by order of the preſent emperor. Claudius alſo reſtored ſuch princes to their kingdoms, as had been unjuſtly diſpoſſeſſed by his predeceſſors, but deprived the Lycians and Rhodians of their liberty, for having promoted inſurrections, and crucified ſome citizens of Rome.

He even undertook to gratify the people by foreign conqueſt. The Britons, who had, for near an hundred years, been left in ſole poſſeſſion of their own iſland, began to ſeek the mediation of Rome, to quell their inteſtine commotions. The principal man, who deſired to ſubject his native country to the Roman dominion, was one Bericus, who, by many arguments perſuaded the emperor to make a deſcent upon the iſland, magnifying the advantages that would attend the conqueſt of it. In purſuance of his advice, therefore, Plautius, the prætor, was ordered to paſs over into Gaul, and make preparations for this great expedition. At firſt, indeed, his ſoldiers ſeemed averſe to embark, declaring that they were unwilling to make war beyond the limits of the world,

for ſo they judged Britain to be. However, they were at laſt perſuaded to go; and the Britons, under the conduct of their king Cynobelinus,
A.D. 49. were ſeveral times overthrown.

Theſe ſucceſſes ſoon after induced Claudius to go into Britain in perſon, upon pretence that the natives were ſtill ſeditious, and had not delivered up ſome Roman fugitives, who had taken ſhelter among them. However, his expedition rather ſeemed calculated for ſhow than ſervice; the time he continued in Britain, which was in all but ſixteen days, was more taken up in receiving homage, than extending his conqueſts. Great rejoicings were made upon his return to Rome: the ſenate decreed him a ſplendid triumph; triumphal arches were erected to his honour, and annual games inſtituted to commemorate his victories. In the mean time, the war was vigorouſly proſecuted by Plautius and his lieutenant Veſpaſian, who, according to Seutonius, fought thirty battles with the enemy, and by that means reduced a part of the iſland into the form of a Roman pro-
A.D. 51. vince. However, this war broke out afreſh under the government of Oſtorius, who ſucceeded Plautius. The Britons, either deſpiſing him for want of experience, or hoping to gain advantages over a perſon newly come to command, roſe up in arms, and diſclaimed the Roman power. The Iceni, the Cangi, and the Brigantes,

made

made a powerful reſiſtance, though they were at length overcome; but the Silures, or inhabitants of South Wales, under their king Caractacus, were the moſt formidable opponents the Roman generals had ever yet encountered. This brave barbarian not only made a gallant defence, but often ſeemed to claim a doubtful victory. He, with great conduct, removed the ſeat of war into the moſt inacceſſible parts of the country, and for nine years kept the Romans in continual alarm.

This general, however, upon the approach of Oſtorius, finding himſelf obliged to come to a deciſive engagement, addreſſed his countrymen with calm reſolution; telling them, that this battle would either eſtabliſh their liberty, or confirm their ſervitude: that they ought to remember the bravery of their anceſtors, by whoſe valour they were delivered from taxes and tributes; and that this was the time to ſhow themſelves equal to their progenitors. Nothing, however, that undiſciplined valour could perform, availed againſt the conduct of the Roman legions. After an obſtinate fight, the Britons were entirely routed: the wife and daughter of Caractacus were taken priſoners; and he ſeeking refuge from Cartiſmandua, queen of the Brigantes, was treacherouſly delivered up to the conquerors. When he was brought to Rome, nothing could

exceed the curioſity of the people, to behold a man who had, for ſo many years, braved the power of the empire. On his part, he teſtified no marks of baſe dejection; but, as he was led through the ſtreets, happening to obſerve the ſplendour of every object around him; "Alas "(cried he) how is it poſſible, that people "poſſeſſed of ſuch magnificence at home "could think of envying Caractacus an humble "cottage in Britain!" When he was brought before the emperor, while the other captives ſued for pity, with the moſt abject lamentations, Caractacus ſtood before the tribunal with an intrepid air, and ſeemed rather willing to accept of pardon, than meanly ſollicitous of ſueing for it. "If (cried he towards the "end of his ſpeech) I had yielded imme-"diately, and without oppoſition, neither my "fortune would have been remarkable, nor "your glory memorable: you would have "ceaſed to be victorious, and I had been for-"gotten. If now, therefore, you ſpare my "life, I ſhall continue a perpetual example "of your clemency." Claudius had the generoſity to pardon him, and Oſtorius was decreed a triumph, which, however, he did not live to enjoy. Though the Britons were thus humbled, they were by no means entirely ſubdued: ſeveral new revolts enſued; but the natives being weakened by diſſenſions among each other

other were many times overthrown, and more eaſily kept under. Theſe tranſactions in Britain continued during the whole reign of Claudius: his firſt expedition into Britain was in the ſecond year of his reign, and the victory over Caractacus in the tenth. I have thrown them, however, in one point of view, to avoid interrupting the narrative.

Claudius, as I have ſaid, gave, in the beginning of his reign, the higheſt hopes of an happy continuance; but he ſoon began to leſſen his care for the public, and to commit to his favourites all the concerns of the empire. This weak prince had from his infancy been in a ſtate of pupilage; and now, when called to govern, he was unable to act, but under the direction of others. Men of narrow capacities, and feeble minds are only good or evil, as they happen to fall into the hands of virtuous or vicious guides; and, unhappily for him, his directors were, to the laſt degree, abandoned and infamous. The chief of theſe was his wife, Meſſalina, whoſe name is almoſt become a common appellation to women of abandoned characters. However, ſhe was not leſs remarkable for her cruelties than her luſts, as by her intrigues ſhe deſtroyed many of the moſt illuſtrious families of Rome. Subordinate to her were the emperor's freedmen; Pallas the treaſurer; Narciſſus, the ſecretary of ſtate; and Calliſtus, the

maſter of the requeſts. Theſe entirely governed Claudius; ſo that he was only left the fatigues of ceremony, while they were poſſeſſed of all the power of the ſtate.

It would be tedious to enumerate the various cruelties which theſe inſidious adviſers obliged the feeble emperor to commit: thoſe againſt his own family will ſuffice. Appius Silanus, a perſon of great merit, who had been married to the emperor's mother-in-law, was put to death upon the ſuggeſtions of Meſſalina. After him he ſlew both his ſons-in-law, Silanus and Pompey, and his two nieces, the Livias, one the daughter of Druſus, the other of Germanicus; and all without permitting them to plead in their defence, or even without aſſigning any cauſe for his diſpleaſure. Great numbers of others fell a ſacrifice to the jealouſy of Meſſalina and her minions, who bore ſo great a ſway in the ſtate, that all offices, dignities, and governments, were entirely at their diſpoſal. Every thing was put to ſale: they took money for pardons and penalties; and accumulated, by theſe means, ſuch vaſt ſums, that the wealth of Craſſus was conſidered as nothing in compariſon. One day, the emperor complaining that his exchequer was exhauſted, he was ludicrouſly told, that it might be ſufficiently repleniſhed, if his two freedmen would take him into partnerſhip. Still, however, during ſuch immenſe ſtrides of corruption,

corruption, he regarded his favourites with the higheſt eſteem, and even ſollicited the ſenate to grant them peculiar marks of their approbation. Theſe diſorders in the miniſters of government did not fail to produce conſpiracies againſt the emperor. Statius Corvinus and Gallus Aſſinus formed a conſpiracy againſt him. Two knights, whoſe names are not told us, privately combined to aſſaſſinate him. But the revolt which gave him the greateſt uneaſineſs, and which was puniſhed with the moſt unrelenting ſeverity, was that of Camillus, his lieutenant-governor in Dalmatia. This general, incited by many of the principal men of Rome, openly rebelled againſt him, and aſſumed the title of emperor. Nothing could exceed the terrors of Claudius, upon being informed of this revolt: his nature and his crimes had diſpoſed him to be more cowardly than the reſt of mankind; ſo that when Camillus commanded him by his letters to relinquiſh the empire, and retire to a private ſtation, he ſeemed inclined to obey. Notwithſtanding, his fears upon this account were ſoon removed; for the legions which had declared for Camillus, being terrified by ſome remarkable prodigies, ſhortly after abandoned him; ſo that the man whom but five days before they had acknowledged as emperor, they now thought it no infamy to deſtroy. The cruelty of Meſſalina and her minions upon this occaſion, ſeemed to

have no bounds. They ſo wrought upon the emperor's fears and ſuſpicions, that numbers were executed without tryal or proof; and ſcarce any, even of thoſe who were but ſuſpected, eſcaped, unleſs by ranſoming their lives with their fortunes.

Among the number who were put to death on this occaſion, I cannot omit mentioning the pathetick cataſtrophe of Petus and his faithful wife Arria. Cecina Petus was one of thoſe unfortunate men, who joined with Camillus againſt the emperor; and who, when his aſſociate was ſlain by the army, had endeavoured to eſcape into Dalmatia. However, he was there apprehended, and put on board a ſhip, in order to be conveyed to Rome. Arria, who had been long the partner of his affections and misfortunes, entreated his keepers to be taken in the ſame veſſel with her huſband. "It is uſual (ſhe ſaid) "to grant a man of his quality a few ſlaves, to "dreſs, and undreſs, and attend him; but I will "perform all theſe offices, and ſave you the "trouble of a more numerous retinue." Her fidelity, however, could not prevail. She therefore hired a fiſherman's bark, and thus kept company with the ſhip in which her huſband was conveyed, through the voyage. They had an only ſon, equally remarkable for the beauty of his perſon, and the rectitude of his diſpoſition. This youth died at the time his father was confined

fined to his bed by a dangerous diſorder. However, the affectionate Arria concealed her ſon's death, and in her viſits to her huſband teſtified no marks of ſadneſs. Being aſked how her ſon did, ſhe replied that he was at reſt, and only left her huſband's chamber to give a vent to her tears. When Petus was condemned to die, and the orders were that he ſhould put an end to his own life, Arria uſed every art to inſpire him with reſolution; and, at length, finding him continue timid and wavering, ſhe took the poniard, and ſtabbing herſelf in his preſence, preſented it to him, ſaying, "It gives me no "pain, my Petus."

By ſuch cruelties as theſe, the favourites of the emperor endeavoured to eſtabliſh his and their own authority: but, in order to increaſe the neceſſity of their aſſiſtance, they laboured to augment the greatneſs of his terrors. He now became a prey to jealouſy and diſquietude. Being one day in the temple, and finding a ſword that was left there by accident, he convened the ſenate in a fright, and informed them of his danger. After this he never ventured to go to any feaſt without being ſurrounded by his guards, nor would he ſuffer any man to approach him without a previous ſearch. Thus wholly employed by his anxiety for ſelf-preſervation, he entirely left the care of the ſtate to his favourites, who by degrees gave him a re-

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liſh for ſlaughter. From this time he ſeemed delighted with inflicting tortures, and on a certain occaſion continued a whole day at the city Tibur, waiting for a hangman from Rome, that he might feaſt his eyes with an execution in the manner of the ancients. Nor was he leſs regardleſs of the perſons he condemned, than cruel in the infliction of their puniſhment. Such was his extreme ſtupidity, that he would frequently invite thoſe to ſupper whom he had put to death but the day before; and often denied the having given orders for an execution, but a few hours after pronouncing ſentence. Suetonius aſſures us, that there were no leſs than thirty-five ſenators, and above three hundred knights, executed in his reign; and that ſuch was his unconcern in the midſt of cruelty, that one of his tribunes bringing him an account of a certain ſenator who was executed, he quite forgot his offence, but calmly acquieſced in his puniſhment.

In this manner was Claudius urged on by Meſſalina to commit cruelties, which he conſidered only as wholeſome ſeverities, while in the mean time, ſhe put no bounds to her enormities. The impunity of her paſt vices only increaſing her confidence to commit new, her debaucheries became every day more notorious, and her lewdneſs exceeded what had ever been ſeen in Rome. She choſe her paramours

through

through wantonneſs, and then ſacrificed them through caprice. She cauſed ſome women of the firſt quality to commit adultery in the preſence of their huſbands, and deſtroyed ſuch as refuſed to comply. After appearing for ſome years inſatiable in her deſires, ſhe at length fixed her affections upon Caius Silius, the moſt beautiful youth in Rome. As all her paſſions were in extreme, her love for this young Roman ſeemed to amount to madneſs. She obliged him to divorce his wife Junia Syllana, that he might entirely devote himſelf to her. She obliged him to accept of immenſe treaſures, and valuable preſents, cohabiting with him in the moſt open manner, and treating him with the moſt ſhameleſs familiarity. The imperial ornaments were even conveyed to his houſe, and the emperor's ſlaves and attendants had orders to wait upon the adulterer. Nothing was wanting to complete the inſolence of their conduct, but their being married; which was ſoon after effected. They relied upon the emperor's imbecility for ſecurity, and only waited till he retired to Oſtia, to put their ill-judged project into execution. In his abſence they celebrated their nuptials with all the ceremonies and ſplendour which attend the moſt confident ſecurity. Meſſalina, giving a looſe to her paſſion, appeared as a Bacchanalian with a thyrſus in her hand; while Silius aſſumed the

character of Bacchus, his body being adorned with robes imitating ivy, and his legs covered with buſkins. A troop of ſingers and dancers attended, who heightened the revel with the moſt laſcivious ſongs and the moſt indecent attitudes. In the midſt of this riot, one Valens, a buffoon, is ſaid to have climbed a tree; and being demanded what he ſaw, anſwered, that he perceived a dreadful ſtorm coming from Oſtia.

What this fellow ſpoke at random, was actually at that time in preparation. It ſeems that ſome time before, as the friendſhips of the vicious are always of ſhort duration, there had been a quarrel between Meſſalina and Narciſſus, the emperor's firſt freedman. This ſubtile miniſter, therefore, deſired nothing more than an opportunity of ruining the empreſs, and he judged this to be the moſt favourable occaſion. He firſt made the diſcovery, by means of two concubines who attended the emperor. They were inſtructed to inform him of Meſſalina's marriage, as the news of the day, while Narciſſus ſtepped in to confirm their information. Finding that it operated upon the emperor's fears as he could wiſh, he reſolved to alarm him ſtill more by a diſcovery of all Meſſalina's projects and attempts. He aggravated the danger, and urged the expediency of ſpeedily puniſhing the delinquents. Claudius, quite terrified at ſo unexpected a relation, ſuppoſed

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that the enemy was already at his gates, and frequently interrupted his freedman, by aſking if he was ſtill maſter of the empire. Being aſſured that he yet had it in his power to continue ſo, he reſolved to puniſh the affront offered to his dignity without delay. Nothing could exceed the conſternation of Meſſalina and her thoughtleſs companions, upon being informed that the emperor was coming to diſturb their feſtivity. Every one retired in the utmoſt confuſion. Silius was taken. Meſſalina took ſhelter in ſome gardens formerly belonging to Lucullus, but which ſhe had lately ſeiſed upon, having expelled Aſiaticus the true owner, and put him to death. From thence ſhe ſent Britannicus, her only ſon by the emperor, with Octavia her daughter, to intercede for her, and implore his mercy. She ſoon after followed them; but Narciſſus had ſo fortified the emperor againſt her arts, and contrived ſuch methods of diverting his attention from her defence, that ſhe was obliged to retire in deſpair.

Narciſſus being thus far ſucceſsful, led Claudius to the houſe of the adulterer; there ſhowed him the apartments adorned with the ſpoils of his own palace; and then conducting him to the prætorian camp, revived his courage by giving him aſſurances of the readineſs of the ſoldiers to defend him. Having thus artfully wrought upon his fears and reſentment, the

wretched Silius was commanded to appear, who making no defence, was inſtantly put to death in the emperor's preſence. Several others ſhared the ſame fate, but Meſſalina ſtill flattered herſelf with hopes of pardon. She reſolved to leave neither prayers nor tears unattempted to appeaſe the emperor. She ſometimes even gave a looſe to her reſentment, and threatened her accuſers with vengeance. Nor did ſhe want ground for entertaining the moſt favourable expectations. Claudius having returned from the execution of her paramour, and having allayed his reſentment in a banquet, began to relent. He therefore commanded his attendants to apprize that miſerable creature, meaning Meſſalina, of his reſolution to hear her accuſation the next day, and ordered her to be in readineſs with her defence. The permiſſion to defend herſelf might have proved fatal to Narciſſus, if he had not ruſhed out, and ordered the tribunes and centurions, who were in readineſs, to execute her immediately, by the emperor's command. Upon their arrival at the gardens, where ſhe ſtill continued, they found her ſtretched upon the ground, attended by her mother Lepida, who exhorted her to prevent her puniſhment by a voluntary death. But this unfortunate woman was too much ſoftened by luxury, to be able to face death without terror. Inſtead of fortifying

tifying her reſolution to meet the blow, ſhe only gave way to tears and unpitied diſtreſs. At length, taking a ſword from one of the ſoldiers, ſhe put it to her breaſt; but her fears ſtill prolonging the blow, the tribune ran her through the body, and ſo diſpatched her. Claudius was immediately informed of her death, in the midſt of his banquet; but this inſenſible ideot ſhewed not the leaſt appearance of emotion. He continued at table with his uſual tranquillity, while neither the love he bore her, the joy of her accuſers, nor the ſorrow of his children, had the leaſt effect upon his temper. As a proof, however, that this proceeded rather from ſtupidity than fortitude, the day following, while he was ſitting at table, he aſked why Meſſalina was abſent, as if he had totally forgotten her crimes and her puniſhment.

Claudius, being now a widower, declared publickly, that as he had been hitherto unfortunate in his marriages, he would remain ſingle for the future; and that he would be contented to forfeit his life, in caſe he broke his reſolution. However, the reſolutions of Claudius were but of ſhort continuance. Having been accuſtomed to live under the controul of women, his preſent freedom was become irkſome to him, and he was entirely unable to live without a director. His freedmen, therefore, perceiving his inclinations, reſolved to procure him another

another wife; and, after ſome deliberations, they fixed upon Agrippina, the daughter of his brother Germanicus. This woman was more practiſed in vice than even the former empreſs. Her cruelties were more dangerous, as they were directed with greater caution: ſhe had poiſoned her former huſband, to be at liberty to attend the calls of ambition; and, perfectly acquainted with all the infirmities of Claudius, only made uſe of his power to advance her own. However, as the late declaration of Claudius ſeemed to be an obſtacle to his marrying again, perſons were ſuborned to move in the ſenate, that he ſhould be compelled to take a wife, as a matter of great importance to the commonwealth; and ſome more determined flatterers than the reſt, left the houſe, as with a thorough reſolution that inſtant to conſtrain him. When this decree (by which all inceſtuous marriages were made lawful) paſſed in the ſenate, Claudius had ſcarce patience to contain himſelf a day before the celebration of his nuptials. But ſuch was the deteſtation in which the people in general held theſe inceſtuous matches, that, though they were made lawful, yet only one of his tribunes, and one of his freedmen, were found baſe enough to follow his example.

Claudius having now received a new director, ſubmitted with more implicit obedience than

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in any former part of his reign. Agrippina's chief aims were to gain the ſucceſſion in favour of her ſon Nero, and to ſet aſide the claims of young Britannicus, ſon to the emperor and Meſſalina. For this purpoſe ſhe married Nero to the emperor's daughter Octavia, a few days after her own marriage. Not long after this, ſhe urged the emperor to ſtrengthen the ſucceſſion, in imitation of his predeceſſors, by making a new adoption; and adviſed him to take in her ſon Nero, in ſome meaſure to divide the fatigues of government. The feeble prince, who had no diſcernment nor malice but what was infuſed in him, immediately yielded to her perſuaſions, and adopted Nero in preference to his only ſon Britannicus. Her next care was to increaſe her ſon's popularity, by giving him Seneca for a tutor. This excellent man, by birth a Spaniard, had been baniſhed into the iſland of Corſica by Claudius, upon the falſe teſtimony of Meſſalina, who had accuſed him of adultery with Julia, the emperor's niece. The people loved and admired him for his genius, but ſtill more for his ſtrict morality; and a part of his reputation therefore neceſſarily devolved to his pupil. Agrippina was not leſs aſſiduous in pretending the utmoſt affection for Britannicus; whom, however, ſhe reſolved at a proper time to deſtroy; but her jealouſy was not confined to

this child only; ſhe, ſhortly after her acceſſion, procured the deaths of ſeveral ladies who had been her rivals in the emperor's affections. She diſplaced the captain of the guard, and appointed Burrhus to that command; a perſon of great military knowledge, and ſtrongly attached to her intereſts. From that time, ſhe took leſs pains to diſguiſe her power, and frequently entered the Capitol in a chariot; a privilege which none before were allowed, except thoſe of the ſacerdotal order.

U. C. 790. A.D. 52.

In the twelfth year of this monarch's reign, ſhe perſuaded him to reſtore liberty to the Rhodians, of which he had deprived them ſome years before; and to remit the taxes of the citizens of Ilium, as having been the progenitors of Rome. Her deſign in this was to increaſe the popularity of Nero, who pleaded the cauſe of both with great approbation. Thus did this ambitious woman take every ſtep to aggrandiſe her ſon, and was even contented to become hateful herſelf to the public, merely to increaſe his popularity. Being one day told by an aſtrologer, that he would be emperor, and yet the cauſe of her death; "Let him "kill me, (anſwered ſhe) provided he but "reigns." *Occidet dum imperat.*

Such a very immoderate abuſe of her power, ſerved at laſt to awaken the emperor's ſuſpicions.

Agrip-

Agrippina's imperious temper began to grow inſupportable to him; and he was heard to declare, when heated with wine, That it was his fate to ſuffer the diſorders of his wives, and to be their executioner. This expreſſion ſunk deep on her mind, and engaged all her faculties to prevent the blow. Her firſt care was to remove Narciſſus, whom ſhe hated upon many accounts, but particularly for his attachment to Claudius. This miniſter, for ſome time, oppoſed her deſigns; but at length thought fit to retire by a voluntary exile into Campania. The unhappy emperor, thus expoſed to all the machinations of his inſidious conſort, ſeemed entirely regardleſs of the dangers that threatened his deſtruction. His affection for Britannicus was perceived every day to increaſe, and ſerved alſo to increaſe the vigilance of Agrippina, and add ſtings to her jealouſy. She now, therefore, reſolved not to defer a crime which ſhe had meditated a long while before; namely, that of poiſoning her huſband. She for ſome time, however, debated with herſelf in what manner ſhe ſhould adminiſter the poiſon; as ſhe feared too ſtrong a doſe would diſcover her treachery, and one too weak might fail in its effect. At length ſhe determined upon a poiſon of ſingular efficacy to deſtroy his intellects, and yet not ſuddenly to terminate his life. As ſhe had

been long converſant in this horrid practice, ſhe applied to a woman called Locuſta, notorious for aſſiſting on ſuch occaſions. The poiſon was given the emperor among muſhrooms, a diſh he was particularly fond of. Shortly after having eaten, he dropped down inſenſible; but this cauſed no alarm, as it was uſual with him to ſit eating till he had ſtupified all his faculties, and was obliged to be carried off to his bed from the table. However, his conſtitution ſeemed to overcome the effects of the potion, when Agrippina reſolved to admit of no further delay, wherefore ſhe directed an abandoned phyſician, who was her creature, to thruſt a poiſoned feather down his throat, under pretence of making him vomit; which ſoon put a period to his life.

The reign of this emperor, feeble and impotent as it was, produced no great calamities in the ſtate, ſince his cruelties were chiefly levelled at thoſe about his perſon. The liſt of the inhabitants of Rome at this time amounted to ſix millions eight hundred and forty-four thouſand ſouls; a number equal, perhaps, to all the people of England at this day. In ſuch a concourſe, it is not to be doubted but every virtue and every vice muſt come to their higheſt pitch of refinement; and, in fact, the conduct of Seneca ſeems an inſtance of the former, and that of Meſſalina of the latter. However, the general

general character of the times was that of corruption and luxury; for wherever there is a great ſuperfluity of wealth, there will alſo be ſeen a thouſand vicious modes of exhauſting it. The military ſpirit of Rome, though much relaxed from its former ſeverity, ſtill continued to awe mankind; and though during this reign, the world might be juſtly ſaid to be without a head, yet the terror of the Roman name alone kept mankind in their obedience.

CHAP. VII.

NERO, the Sixth EMPEROR of Rome.

U.C. 793. A.D. 55. CLAUDIUS being deſtroyed, Agrippina took every precaution to conceal his death from the public, until ſhe had ſettled her meaſures for ſecuring the ſucceſſion. A ſtrong guard was placed at all the avenues of the palace, while ſhe amuſed the people with various reports; at one time giving out that he was ſtill alive; at another, that he was recovering. In the mean while ſhe had made ſure of the perſon of young Britannicus, under pretence of affection for him. Like one overcome with the extremity of her grief, ſhe held the child in her arms, calling him the dear image of his father, and thus preventing his eſcape. She uſed the ſame precautions with regard to his ſiſters, Octavia and Antonia; and even ordered an entertainment in the palace, as if to amuſe the emperor. At laſt, when all things were adjuſted, the palace gates were thrown open; when Nero, accompanied by Burrhus, prefect of the prætorian guards, iſſued to receive the congratulations of the people and the army. The cohort, then attending, proclaimed

him with the loudeſt acclamations, though not without making ſome enquiries after Britannicus. He was carried in a chariot to the reſt of the army; where, having made a ſpeech proper for the occaſion, and promiſing them a donation, in the manner of his predeceſſors, he was declared emperor by the army, the ſenate, and the people.

Nero's firſt care was to ſhow all poſſible reſpect to the deceaſed emperor, in order to cover the guilt of his death. His obſequies were performed with a pomp equal to that of Auguſtus: the young emperor pronounced his funeral oration; and he, who ſcarce deſerved the name of man, was canonized among the gods. The funeral oration, though ſpoken by Nero, was drawn up by Seneca, and it was remarked, that this was the firſt time a Roman emperor needed the aſſiſtance of another's eloquence.

Nero, though but ſeventeen years of age, began his reign with the general approbation of mankind. As he owed the empire to Agrippina, ſo, in the beginning, he ſubmitted to her directions with the moſt implicit obedience. On her part, ſhe ſeemed reſolved on governing with her natural ferocity, and conſidered her private animoſities as the only rule to guide her in public juſtice. Immediately after the death of Claudius, ſhe cauſed Silanus, the pro-conſul of Aſia, to be aſſaſſinated, upon very ſlight

ſuſpicions, and without even acquainting the emperor with her deſign. The next object of her reſentment was Narciſſus, the late emperor's favourite; a man equally notorious for the greatneſs of his wealth, and the number of his crimes. He was obliged to put an end to his life, by Agrippina's order, although Nero refuſed his conſent.

This bloody outſet would have been followed by many ſeverities of the ſame nature, had not Seneca and Burrhus, the emperor's tutor and general, oppoſed. Theſe worthy men, although they owed their riſe to the empreſs, were above being the inſtruments of her cruelty. They, therefore, combined in an oppoſition; and gaining the young emperor on their ſide, formed a plan of power, at once the moſt merciful and wiſe. The beginning of this monarch's reign, while he continued to act by their counſels, has always been conſidered as a model for ſucceeding princes to govern by. The famous emperor Trajan uſed to ſay, "That "for the firſt five years of this prince, all other "governments came ſhort of his." In fact, the young monarch knew ſo well how to conceal his innate depravity, that his neareſt friends could ſcarcely perceive his virtues to be aſſumed. He appeared juſt, liberal, and humane. When a warrant for the execution of a criminal was brought him to be ſigned, he was heard

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to cry out with ſeeming concern, "Would to "Heaven that I had never learned to write." The ſenate, upon a certain occaſion, giving him their applauſe, for the regularity and juſtice of his adminiſtration, he replied, with ſingular modeſty, "That they ſhould defer their thanks "till he had deſerved them." His condeſcenſion and affability were not leſs than his other virtues; ſo that the Romans began to think, that Heaven had ſent them a prince, whoſe clemency would compenſate for the tyranny of his predeceſſors.

In the mean time, Agrippina, who was excluded from any ſhare in the government, attempted, by every poſſible method, to maintain her declining power. Perceiving that her ſon had fallen in love with a freed-woman, named Acte, and dreading the influence of a concubine, ſhe tried every art to prevent his growing paſſion. However, in ſo corrupt a court, it was no difficult matter for the emperor to find other confidants, ready to aſſiſt him in his wiſhes. The gratification of his paſſion, therefore, in this inſtance, only ſerved to increaſe his hatred for the empreſs. Nor was it long before he gave evident marks of his diſobedience, by diſplacing Pallas, her chief favourite. It was upon this occaſion, that ſhe firſt perceived the total declenſion of her authority, which threw her into the moſt ungovernable fury,

fury. In order to give terror to her rage, ſhe proclaimed that Britannicus, the real heir to the throne, was ſtill living, and in a condition to receive his father's empire, which was now poſſeſſed by an uſurper. She threatened to go to the camp, and there expoſe his baſeneſs and her own, invoking all the furies to her aſſiſtance. Theſe menaces ſerved to alarm the ſuſpicions of Nero; who, though apparently guided by his governors, yet already began to give way to his natural depravity. He, therefore, determined upon the death of Britannicus; and contrived to have him poiſoned at a public banquet. Agrippina, however, ſtill retained her natural ferocity; ſhe took every opportunity of obliging and flattering the tribunes and centurions; ſhe heaped up treaſures, with a rapacity beyond her natural avarice; all her actions ſeemed calculated to raiſe a faction, and make herſelf formidable to the emperor. Whereupon, Nero commanded her German guard to be taken from her, and obliged her to lodge out of the palace. He alſo forbid particular perſons from viſiting her, and went himſelf but rarely and ceremoniouſly to pay her his reſpects. She now, therefore, began to find, that, with the emperor's favour, ſhe had loſt the aſſiduity of her friends. She was even accuſed by Sillana of conſpiring againſt her ſon, and of deſigning to marry Plautius, a perſon deſcended from Auguſtus

Auguſtus, and of making him emperor. A ſhort time after, Pallas her favourite, together with Burrhus, were arraigned for a ſimilar offence, and intending to ſet up Cornelius Sylla. Theſe informations being proved void of any foundation, the informers were baniſhed; a puniſhment which was conſidered as very inadequate to the greatneſs of their offences.

As Nero increaſed in years, his crimes ſeemed to increaſe in proportion. He now began to find a pleaſure in running about the city by night, diſguiſed like a ſlave. In this vile habit he entered taverns and brothels, attended by the lewd miniſters of his pleaſures, attempting the lives of ſuch as oppoſed him, and frequently endangering his own. In imitation of the emperor's example, numbers of profligate young men infeſted the ſtreets likewiſe; ſo that every night the city was filled with tumult and diſorder. However, the people bore all theſe levities, which they aſcribed to the emperor's youth, with patience; having occaſion every day to experience his liberality, and having alſo been gratified by the abolition of many of their taxes. The provines alſo were no way affected by theſe riots; for except ſome diſturbances on the ſide of the Parthians, which were ſoon ſuppreſſed, they enjoyed the moſt perfect tranquillity.

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But thoſe ſenſualities, which, for the four firſt years of his reign, produced but few diſorders, in the fifth became alarming. He firſt began to tranſgreſs the bounds of decency, by publickly abandoning Octavia, his preſent wife, and then by taking Poppea, the wife of his favourite Otho, a woman more celebrated for her beauty than her virtues. This was another grating circumſtance to Agrippina, who vainly uſed all her intereſt to diſgrace Poppea, and re-inſtate herſelf in her ſon's loſt favour. Hiſtorians aſſert, that ſhe even offered to ſatisfy his paſſions herſelf, by an inceſtuous compliance; and that, had not Seneca interpoſed, the ſon would have joined in the mother's crime. This, however, does not ſeem probable, ſince we find Poppea victorious, ſoon after, in the contention of intereſts; and at laſt impelling Nero to parricide, to ſatisfy her revenge. She began her arts by urging him to divorce his preſent wife, and marry her: ſhe reproached him as a pupil, who wanted not only power over others, but liberty to direct himſelf. She inſinuated the dangerous deſigns of Agrippina; and, by degrees, accuſtomed his mind to reflect upon parricide without horror. His cruelties againſt his mother began rather by ſeveral circumſtances of petty malice, than by any downright injury. He encouraged ſeveral perſons to teize her with litigious ſuits: he employed ſome of the meaneſt

of the people to ſing ſatirical ſongs againſt her under her windows. At laſt, finding theſe ineffectual, in breaking her ſpirit, he reſolved on putting her to death. His firſt attempt was by poiſon; but this, though twice repeated, proved ineffectual, as ſhe had fortified her conſtitution againſt it by antidotes. This failing, a ſhip was contrived in ſo artificial a manner as to fall to pieces in the water, on board of which ſhe was invited to ſail to the coaſts of Calabria. However, this plot was as ineffectual as the former: the mariners not being all apprized of the ſecret, diſturbed each others operations; ſo that the ſhip not ſinking as readily as was expected, Agrippina found means to continue ſwimming, till ſhe was taken up by ſome trading veſſels paſſing that way.

Nero thus finding that all his machinations were diſcovered, reſolved to throw off the maſk, and put her openly to death without further delay. He therefore cauſed a report to be ſpread, that ſhe had conſpired againſt him; and a poignard was dropped at his feet by one who pretended a command from Agrippina to aſſaſſinate him. In conſequence of this, he applied to his governors, Seneca and Burrhus, for their advice how to act, and their aſſiſtance in ridding him of the object of his fears. Things were now come to ſuch a criſis, that no middle way could be taken; and either Nero or Agrippina was

to

to fall. Seneca, therefore, kept a profound ſilence; while Burrhus, with more reſolution, refuſed to be the perpretrator of ſo great a crime: alledging, that the army was entirely devoted to all the deſcendants of Cæſar, and would never be brought to imbrue their hands in the blood of any of his family. In this embaraſſment, Anicetus, the contriver of the ſhip abovementioned, offered his ſervices; which Nero accepted with the greateſt joy, crying out, "That this was the firſt moment he ever found "himſelf an emperor." This freed-man, therefore, taking with him a body of ſoldiers, ſurrounded the houſe of Agrippina, and then forced open her doors. He next ſeiſed upon every ſlave he met, until he came near the chamber where Agrippina lay. In the mean time, Agrippina, who ſtrove to conceal her conſciouſneſs of Nero's deſigns, continued anxiouſly expecting the return of a meſſenger, whom ſhe had ſent with an account of her eſcape. However, perceiving a ſudden ſtillneſs without, among the crowds that had, but a few moments before, been loud in their congratulations, ſhe aſked the cauſe, and demanded of the ſlave who attended her, if her emiſſary were returned. While ſhe yet continued ſpeaking, the ſlave diſappeared, and Anicetus entered the apartment, accompanied by two ſoldiers, in whoſe looks ſhe read her fate. She ſtill, however, preſerved

ſerved preſence of mind ſufficient to aſk the cauſe of their coming. "If (cried ſhe) you "come to inquire after my health, you may in-"form the emperor that I am better; but if you "come with any worſe intention, you alone, "and not my ſon, muſt be guilty." To this the executioners made no reply, but one of them daſhed his club at her head, which, nevertheleſs, did not diſpatch her. Now, therefore, finding that ſhe was to expect no mercy, and ſeeing Anicetus draw his ſword to ſtab her, ſhe preſented her boſom, crying out, "Strike here, "for this place gave birth to a monſter." The executioners having diſpatched her, with ſeveral wounds, left her dead on the couch, and went to inform Nero of what they had done. Some hiſtorians ſay, that Nero came immediately to view the body; that he continued to gaze upon it with pleaſure, commending ſome parts, and diſpraiſing others; and ending this horrid ſurvey, by coolly obſerving, that he never thought his mother had been ſo handſome. However this be, he vindicated his conduct next day to the ſenate, who not only excuſed, but applauded his impiety.

All the mounds of virtue being thus broken down, Nero gave a looſe to his appetites, that were not only ſordid but inhuman. There ſeemed an odd contraſt in his diſpoſition; for while he practiſed cruelties, which were ſufficient to make the mind ſhudder with horror, he was fond

fond of thoſe amuſing arts that ſoften and refine the heart. He was particularly addicted, even from childhood, to muſic, and not totally ignorant of poetry. But chariot-driving was his favourite purſuit. He never miſſed the circus, when chariot-races were to be exhibited there; appearing at firſt privately, and ſoon after publickly; till, at laſt, his paſſion increaſing by indulgence, he was not content with being merely a ſpectator, but reſolved to become one of the principal performers. His governors, however, did all in their power to reſtrain this pitiful ambition: but finding him reſolute, they encloſed a ſpace of ground in the valley of the Vatican, where he firſt exhibited only to ſome choſen ſpectators, but ſhortly after invited the whole town. The praiſes of his flattering ſubjects only ſtimulated him ſtill more to theſe unbecoming purſuits; ſo that he now reſolved to aſſume a new character, and to appear as a ſinger upon the ſtage.

His paſſion for muſic, as was obſerved, was no leſs natural to him than the former; but as it was leſs manly, ſo he endeavoured to defend it by the example of ſome of the moſt celebrated men, who practiſed it with the ſame fondneſs. He had been inſtructed in the principles of this art from his childhood; and, upon his advancement to the empire, he had put himſelf under the moſt celebrated maſters. He patiently ſubmitted to their inſtructions, and uſed all thoſe methods

methods which ſingers practiſe, either to mend the voice, or improve its volubility. Yet, notwithſtanding all his aſſiduity, his voice was but a wretched one, being both feeble and unpleaſant. However, he was reſolved to produce it to the public, ſuch as it was; for flattery, he knew, would ſupply every deficiency. His firſt public appearance was at games of his own inſtitution, called Juveniles; where he advanced upon the ſtage, tuning his inſtrument to his voice, with great appearance of ſkill. A groupe of tribunes and centurions attended behind him; while his old governor, Burrhus, ſtood near his hopeful pupil, with indignation in his countenance, and praiſes on his lips.

He was deſirous alſo of becoming a poet; but he was unwilling to undergo the pain of ſtudy, which a proficiency in that art requires; he was deſirous of being a poet ready-made. For this purpoſe he got together ſeveral perſons, who were conſidered as great wits at court, though but very little known as ſuch to the public. Theſe attended him with verſes which they had compoſed at home, or which they blabbed out extemporaneouſly; and the whole of their compoſitions being tacked together, by his direction, was called a poem. Nor was he without his philoſophers alſo: he took a pleaſure in hearing their debates after ſup-

per; but he heard them merely for his amuſement.

Furniſhed with ſuch talents as theſe, for giving pleaſure, he was reſolved to make the tour of his empire, and give the moſt public diſplay of his abilities wherever he came. The place of his firſt exhibition, upon leaving Rome, was at Naples. The crowds there were ſo great, and the curioſity of the people ſo earneſt in hearing him, that they did not perceive an earthquake which happened while he was ſinging. His deſire of gaining the ſuperiority over the other actors was truely ridiculous: he made intereſt with his judges, reviled his competitors, formed private factions to ſupport him, all in imitation of thoſe who got their livelihood upon the ſtage. While he continued to perform, no man was permitted to depart from the theatre upon any pretence whatſoever. Some were ſo fatigued with hearing him, that they leaped privately from the walls, or pretended to fall into fainting fits, in order to be carried out. Nay, its ſaid, that ſeveral women were delivered in the theatre. Soldiers were placed in ſeveral parts, to obſerve the looks and geſtures of the ſpectators, either to direct them where to point their applauſe, or to reſtrain their diſpleaſure. An old ſenator, named Veſpaſian, happening to fall aſleep upon one of theſe occaſions, very narrowly eſcaped with his life.

After

After being fatigued with the praiſes of his countrymen, Nero reſolved upon going over into Greece to receive new theatrical honours. The occaſion was this. The cities of Greece had made a law to ſend him muſical crowns as a conqueror at all the games; and deputies were accordingly diſpatched with this (to him) important embaſſy. As he one day entertained the deputies at his table, in the moſt ſumptuous manner, and converſed with them with the utmoſt familiarity, they entreated to hear him ſing. Upon his complying, the artful Greeks knew how to ſatisfy his vanity, by the exaggeration of their praiſe. They teſtified all the marks of extaſy and rapture. Applauſes ſo warm were peculiarly pleaſing to Nero; he could not refrain from crying out, That the Greeks alone were worthy to hear him; and accordingly prepared without delay, to go into Greece; where he ſpent the whole year enſuing. In this journey, his retinue reſembled an army in number; but it was only compoſed of ſingers, dancers, tailors, and other attendants upon the theatre. He paſſed over Greece, and exhibited at all their games, which he ordered to be celebrated in one year. At the Olympick games he reſolved to ſhow the people ſomething extraordinary; wherefore he drove a chariot with ten horſes: but he had no reaſon to boaſt of his ſucceſs; for being unable to ſuſtain the violence of the mo-

tion, he was thrown from his ſeat. The ſpectators, however, gave him their unanimous applauſe; and he was crowned as conqueror. In this manner he obtained the prize at the Iſthmian, Pythian, and Nemean games. The Greeks were not ſparing of their crowns; he obtained eighteen hundred of them. An unfortunate ſinger happened to oppoſe him on one of theſe occaſions; and exerted all the powers of his art, which, it appears, were prodigious; but he ſeems to have been a better ſinger than a politician; for Nero ordered him to be killed on the ſpot. Upon his return from Greece, he entered Naples through a breach in the walls of the city, as was cuſtomary with thoſe who were conquerors in the Olympick games. But all the ſplendour of his return was reſerved for his entry into Rome. There he appeared ſeated in the chariot of Auguſtus, dreſſed in robes of purple, and crowned with wild olive, which was the Olympick garland. He bore in his hand the Pythian crown; and had eighteen hundred more carried before him. Beſide him ſate one Diodorus, a muſician; and behind him followed a band of ſingers, as numerous as a legion, who ſung in honour of his victories. The ſenate, the knights, and the people, attended this puerile pageant, filling the air with their acclamations. The whole city was illuminated; every ſtreet ſmoked with incenſe; wherever he

paſſed, victims were ſlain; the pavement was ſtrewed with ſaffron; whilſt garlands of flowers, ribbons, fowls, and paſties (for ſo we are told) were ſhowered down upon him from the windows as he paſſed along. So many honours only enflamed his deſire of acquiring new; he at laſt began to take leſſons in wreſtling, willing to imitate Hercules in ſtrength, as he had rivalled Apollo in activity. He alſo cauſed a lion of paſteboard to be made with great art, againſt which he undauntedly appeared in the theatre, and ſtruck it down with a blow of his club.

But it would have been happy for mankind, had he confined himſelf to theſe puerilites; and contented with being contemptible, ſought not to become formidable alſo. His cruelties even outdid all his other extravagancies. A complete liſt of thoſe would exceed the limits of the preſent work; and would preſent the reader with an hideous repetition of ſuſpicions without cauſe, and puniſhments without mercy. Soon after the death of Agrippina, he ordered Domitia, his aunt, to be poiſoned. Some ſay, that Burrhus, who died ſhortly after, underwent the ſame fate. Rebellius Plancus, together with Pallas, Agrippina's favourite, were about this time put to death; the former for being of the Cæſarian family: the latter for being rich. Octavia, his wife, was divorced; and

likewiſe put to death; and Poppæa made empreſs in her place. Sylla and Torquatus Syllanus, with many others, either fell by the executioner, or gave themſelves a voluntary death.

He ſeemed even ſtudious of finding out pleaſures as well as crimes againſt nature. Being attired in the habit of a woman, and covered with a yellow veil like a bride, he was wedded to one of his abominable companions, called Pythagoras, and again to his freedman Doriphorus. On the other hand, that he might be every way deteſtable, he became the huſband of a youth named Sporus, whom he had previouſly deprived of the marks of virility. With this prepoſterous bride, decked out in all the ornaments of an empreſs, he went to all public places: they always rode together in his chariot; and he ſcrupled not to treat him as a woman, in the ſight of the wondering multitude. However, though he eſcaped their anger, he did not fail to incur their ridicule. It was obſerved, upon one of theſe occaſions, that the world had been happy if the emperor's father had been married only to ſuch a ſpouſe. But he little regarded what the wiſer part of mankind thought of him. He was often heard to obſerve, That he had rather be hated than loved. When one happened to ſay in his preſence, That the world might be burnt when he was dead: "Nay,

"Nay (replied Nero) let it be burnt while I "am living." In fact, a great part of the city of Rome was conſumed by fire ſhortly after; and moſt hiſtorians aſcribe the conflagration to him. It is ſaid, that he ſtood upon an high tower, during the continuance of the flames, enjoying the ſight, and repeating, in a player's habit, and in a theatrical manner, ſome verſes upon the deſtruction of Troy. As a proof of his guilt upon this occaſion, none were permitted to lend any aſſiſtance towards extinguiſhing the flames; and ſeveral perſons were ſeen ſetting fire to the houſes, alleding, that they had orders for what they did. However this be, the emperor uſed every art to throw the odium of ſo deteſtable an action from himſelf, and to fix it upon the Chriſtians, who were at that time gaining ground in Rome. Nothing could be more dreadful than the perſecution raiſed againſt them upon this falſe accuſation. Some were covered with the ſkins of wild beaſts; and, in that figure, devoured by dogs. Some were crucified, and others burnt alive. "When the "day was not ſufficient for their tortures, the "flames in which they periſhed (ſays Tacitus) "ſerved to illuminate the night;" while Nero, dreſſed in the habit of a charioteer, regaled himſelf with their tortures from his gardens; and entertained the people at one time with their ſuffering, at another with the games of the

circus. In this perſecution, St. Paul was beheaded; and St. Peter was crucified with his head downwards; which death he choſe, as being more diſhonourable than that of his divine maſter. The inhuman monſter, conſcious of being ſuſpected of burning the city, in order to free himſelf from the ſcandal, took great care to re-edify it even with greater beauty than before. But he ſet no bounds to the magnificence with which his own palace, which had ſhared in the conflagration, was rebuilt. It now received the name of the golden palace, from the rich materials of which it was compoſed; as all the apartments were adorned with the richeſt metals, and the moſt precious jewels. The principal hall was circular, and the cieling moveable, and went round in imitation of the heavenly motions. The extent of the palace was not leſs amazing than its beauty. It was ſo large as to contain within its walls, lakes, parks, and vineyards. The entrance was ſpacious enough to receive a coloſſal ſtatue of the emperor, an hundered and twenty feet high. In ſhort, nothing, either before or ſince, ever equalled the magnificence or richneſs of this ſtructure. Nero, however, when it was finiſhed, only ſaid coolly, That he was now lodged like a man. But he did not ſeem to regard the extortions and exactions in all the provinces, which were made to ſupport

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the enormous expence. The oppreſſion and the miſery of mankind ſeemed to be his pleaſure, and he was every day contented to feaſt upon the deſolation of a province, at a ſingle meal.

Hitherto, however, the citizens of Rome ſeemed comparatively exempt from his cruelties, which chiefly fell upon ſtrangers and his neareſt connexions. A conſpiracy formed againſt him by Piſo, a man of great power and integrity, which was prematurely diſcovered, opened a new train of ſuſpicions that deſtroyed many of the principal families in Rome. The conſpiracy, in which ſeveral of the chief men of the city were concerned, was firſt diſcovered by the indiſcreet zeal of a woman named Epicharis, who, by ſome means now unknown, had been let into the plot, which ſhe revealed to Voluſius, a tribune, in order to prevail upon him to be an accomplice. Voluſius, inſtead of coming into her deſign, went and diſcovered what he had learnt to Nero, who immediately put Epicharis in priſon. Soon after, a freedman belonging to Scænius, one of the accomplices, made a further diſcovery. The conſpirators were examined apart, and as their teſtimonies differed, they were put to the torture. Natalis was the firſt who made a confeſſion of his own guilt, and that of many others. Scævinus gave a liſt of

of the conſpirators ſtill more ample. Lucan, the poet, was amongſt the number, and he, like the reſt, in order to ſave himſelf, ſtill further enlarged the catalogue, naming among others Attilia, his own mother. Epicharis was, therefore, again called upon and put to the torture; but her fortitude was proof againſt all the tyrant's cruelty; neither ſcourging, nor burning, nor all the malicious methods uſed by the executioners, could extort the ſmalleſt confeſſion. She was remanded to priſon, with orders to have her tortures renewed the day following. In the mean time, ſhe found an opportunity of ſtrangling herſelf with her handkerchief, by hanging it againſt the back of her chair.

It need ſcarcely be aſked, whether the reſt of the conſpirators were put to death under ſuch a prince as Nero, whoſe daily cuſtom was to condemn even the innocent. Piſo, Lateranus, Fennius Rufus, Subrius Flavius, Sulpicius Aſper, Veſtinus the conſul, and numberleſs others, were all executed without mercy. But the two moſt remarkable perſonages who fell on this occaſion were Seneca the philoſopher, and Lucan the poet, who was his nephew. It is not certainly known, whether Seneca was really concerned in this conſpiracy or not. This great man had for ſome time perceived the outrageous conduct of his pupil, and finding himſelf incapable of

controlling his ſavage diſpoſition, had retired from court into ſolitude and privacy. However his retreat did not now protect him; for Nero either having real teſtimony againſt him, or elſe hating him for his virtues, ſent a tribune, informing him that he was ſuſpected as an accomplice. The tribune found the philoſopher at table with Paulina his wife, and informing him of his buſineſs, Seneca replied, without any emotion, that his welfare depended upon no man; that he had never been accuſtomed to indulge the errors of the emperor, and would not do it now. When this anſwer was brought back to Nero, he demanded whether Seneca ſeemed afraid to die; the tribune replying that he did not appear in the leaſt terrified: "Then go to him again (cried the emperor) and give him my orders to die."—This tribune was himſelf one of the conſpirators; ſo that, inſtead of immediately returning, he went to aſk the opinion of Fennius Rufus, his commander, whether he ſhould obey. Upon Fennius's adviſing him to it, he ſent a centurion to Seneca, ſignifying that it was the emperor's pleaſure that he ſhould die. Upon receiving this fatal command, Seneca ſeemed no way diſcompoſed, but called for his will, in order to make ſome additions to it in favour of ſome friends that were then with him. This favour, however, the centurion refuſed to grant him;

him; upon which Seneca, turning to his friends, "Since then (cried he) I am not permitted "to leave you any other marks of my affection, "at leaſt, I leave you one legacy more pre- "cious than all the reſt—my example." Then endeavouring to alleviate their diſtreſs, and embracing his wife, the memory of her paſt affection ſeemed to melt him into tears. However, no way unmindful of his conſtancy, he endeavoured to conſole her for his loſs, and exhort her to a life of perſevering virtue. But ſhe ſeemed reſolved on not ſurviving him, and preſſed her requeſt to die with him ſo earneſtly, that Seneca, who had long looked upon death as a benefit, at laſt gave his conſent, and the veins of both their arms were opened at the ſame time. As Seneca was old, and much enfeebled by the auſterities of his life, the blood flowed but ſlowly; ſo that he cauſed the veins of his legs and thighs to be opened alſo. His pains were long and violent, but they were not capable of repreſſing his fortitude or his eloquence. He dictated a diſcourſe to two ſecretaries, which was read with great avidity after his death by the people, but which has ſince periſhed in the wreck of time. His agonies being now drawn out to a great length; he at laſt demanded poiſon from his phyſician; but this alſo failed of its effect, his body being already exhauſted, and incapable of exciting its

its operation. He was then carried into a warm bath, which only ſerved to prolong his end; at length, therefore, he was put into a dry ſtove, the vapour of which quickly diſpatched him. In the mean time, his wife Paulina, having fallen into a ſwoon with the loſs of blood, had her arms bound up by her domeſtics, and by this means ſurvived her huſband for ſome years; but by her conduct during the reſt of her life, ſhe ſeemed always mindful of her own love and his example.

The death of Lucan was not leſs remarkable. The veins of his arms being opened, after he had loſt a great quantity of blood, perceiving his hands and legs already dead, while the vital parts ſtill continued warm and vigorous, he called to mind a deſcription in his own poem of the Pharſalia, of a perſon dying in ſimilar circumſtances, and expired while he was repeating that beautiful paſſage*.

In this manner was the whole city filled with ſlaughter, and frightful inſtances of treachery. No maſter was ſecure from the vengeance

* ——— Nec ſicut vulnere ſanguis
Emicuit lentus. Ruptis cadit undique venis,
——— Pars ultima trunci
Tradidit in letum vacuos vitalibus artus,
At tumidus, quà pulmo jacet, quà viſcera fervent,
Hæſerunt ibi fata diu: Luctataque multum
Hac cum parte, viri vix omnia membra tulerunt.

geance of his ſlaves, nor even parents from the baſer attempts of their children. Not only throughout Rome, but the whole country round, bodies of ſoldiers were ſeen in purſuit of the ſuſpected and the guilty. Whole crowds of wretches, loaded with chains, were led every day to the gates of the palace, to wait their ſentence from the tyrant's own lips. He always preſided at the tortures in perſon, attended by Tigelinus, captain of the guard, who, from being the moſt abandoned man in Rome, was now become his principal miniſter and favourite.

Nor were the Roman provinces in a better ſituation than the capital city. The example of the tyrant ſeemed to influence his governors, who gave inſtances not only of their rapacity, but their cruelty in every part of the empire. In the ſeventh year of his reign, the Britons revolted under the conduct of their queen Boadicea. Paulinus, the Roman general, being at that time employed with part of the legions in expelling the Druids from the iſle of Angleſea, his lieutenants in his abſence committed ſuch barbarities as were intolerable to the inhabitants. Boadicea, queen of the Iceni, was treated with peculiar indignity, being condemned to be ſcourged, and her daughters deflowered by the ſoldiery. In revenge, therefore, at the head of a numerous army, ſhe fell

ſell upon the Romans wherever they were unprovided, took their caſtles, deſtroyed the chief ſeats of their power at London and Verulam; and ſo great was her fury, that ſeventy thouſand Romans periſhed in this revolt. But the Roman general ſoon after revenged his countrymen by a great and deciſive battle, in which eighty thouſand Britons are ſaid to have periſhed; and Boadicea herſelf, rather than fall into the hands of the enraged victor, put an end to her life by poiſon. By this remarkable defeat, the Britons ever after, during the continuance of the Romans amongſt them, loſt not only all hopes, but even all deſire of freedom.

A war alſo was carried on againſt the Parthians, for the greateſt part of this reign, conducted by Corbuto; who, after many ſucceſſes, had diſpoſſeſſed Tiridates, and ſettled Tigranes in Armenia in his room. Tiridates, however, was ſoon after reſtored by an invaſion of the Parthians into that country; but being once more oppoſed by Corbulo, the Romans and Parthians came to an agreement that Tiridates ſhould continue to govern Armenia, upon condition that he ſhould lay down his crown at the feet of the emperor's ſtatue, and receive it as a gift from him; all which he ſhortly after performed—a ceremony, however, which Nero deſired to have repeated to his perſon; wherefore, by letters and promiſes, he invited Tiridates to Rome, granting

him the moſt magnificent ſupplies for his journey. Nero attended his arrival with very ſumptuous preparations. He received him ſeated on a throne, accompanied by the ſenate ſtanding round him, and the whole army drawn out with all imaginable ſplendour. Tiridates aſcended the throne with great reverence, and approaching the emperor, fell down at his feet, and in the moſt abject terms acknowledged himſelf his ſlave. Nero raiſed him up, telling him with equal arrogance, that he did well; and that by his ſubmiſſion he had gained a kingdom which his anceſtors could never acquire by their arms. He then placed the crown on his head, and after the moſt coſtly ceremonies and entertainments, he was ſent back to Armenia with incredible ſums of money to defray the expences of his return.

In the twelfth year of this emperor's reign, the Jews alſo revolted, having been ſeverely oppreſſed by the Roman governors. It is ſaid that Florus, in particular, was arrived at that degree of tyranny, that by public proclamation he gave permiſſion to plunder the country, provided he received half the ſpoil. Theſe oppreſſions drew ſuch a train of calamities after them, that the ſufferings of all other nations were ſlight in compariſon to what this devoted people afterwards endured. I ſhall mention them more at length in the reign of Veſpaſian,

ſian, in which, as Chriſt had propheſied, they came to a completion.

In the mean time, Nero proceeded in his cruelties at Rome, with unabated ſeverity.— Rufius Criſpinus, and Annæus Mella, the brother of Seneca, were deſtroyed upon ſlight ſuſpicions. The death of Petronius, about this time, is too remarkable to be paſſed over in ſilence. This perſon, whom many modern hiſtorians ſuppoſe to be the author of a work of no great merit, entituled Satyricon, which is ſtill remaining, was an Epicurean, both in principle and practice. In ſo luxurious a court as that of Nero, he was particularly noted for his refinements in luxury. He was by no means a low ſenſual debauchee, but chiefly remarkable for giving the moſt ſtudied attempts in wit an air of the moſt elegant ſimplicity. Nero had choſen him among the number of his dependents, as the arbiter of his pleaſures; an office which Tigelinus reſolved to enjoy ſolely to himſelf, and therefore reſolved upon his deſtruction. He was accuſed accordingly of being privy to Piſo's conſpiracy, and committed to priſon. Petronius could not endure the anxiety of ſuſpenſe, wherefore he reſolved upon putting himſelf to death; which he performed in a manner entirely ſimilar to that in which he had lived. He cauſed his veins to be opened, and then cloſed; and again opened at intervals; U.C. 817. A.D. 66.

and with the utmoſt chearfulneſs and tranquillity converſed with his friends, not upon maxims of philoſophy, or grave ſubjects, but upon ſuch topicks as had amuſed his gayeſt revels. He liſtened while they recited the lighteſt poems; and by no action, no word, nor circumſtance, ſhowed the perplexity of a dying perſon.— Shortly after him, Numicius Thermus was put to death, as likewiſe Barea Soranus, and Petus Thraſea. The deſtroying the two laſt, Tacitus calls an attack upon virtue itſelf. Thraſea died in the midſt of his friends and philoſophers, converſing and reaſoning on the nature of the ſoul. His wife, who was the daughter of the celebrated Arria, was deſirous of following her mother's example, but he diſſuaded her from it. The death of the valiant Corbulo, who had gained Nero ſo many victories over the Parthians, followed next. Nor did the empreſs Poppea herſelf eſcape, whom, in a fit of anger, he kicked when ſhe was pregnant, by which ſhe miſcarried and died. At length, human nature grew weary of bearing her perſecutor, and the whole world ſeemed to rouſe, as if by common conſent, to rid the earth of a monſter.

The inbred diſtempers of the empire, which had been contracted under the deteſtable government of four ſucceeding princes, now began to diſcover themſelves in their furious

effects, and there appeared a general revolution in all the provinces.

The firſt appeared in Gaul, under Julius Vindex, who commanded the legions there, and publickly proteſted againſt the tyrannical government of Nero. He appeared to have no other motive for this revolt than that of freeing the world from an oppreſſor; for when it was told him that Nero had ſet a reward upon his head of ten millions of ſeſterces, he made this gallant anſwer, "Whoever brings me Nero's "head, ſhall, if he pleaſes, have mine." But ſtill more to ſhow he was not actuated by motives of private ambition, he proclaimed Sergius Galba, emperor, and invited him to join in the revolt. Sergius Galba, who was at that time governor of Spain, was equally remarkable for his wiſdom in peace, and his courage in war. But as all talents under corrupt princes are dangerous, he for ſome years had ſeemed willing to court obſcurity, giving himſelf up to an inactive life, and avoiding all opportunities of ſignalizing his valour. He now, therefore, either through the caution attending old age, or from a total want of ambition, appeared little inclined to join with Vindex, and continued for ſome time to deliberate with his friends on the part he ſhould take.

In the mean time, Nero, who had been apprized of the proceedings againſt him in Gaul,

appeared totally regardleſs of the danger, privately flattering himſelf that the ſuppreſſion of this revolt would give him an opportunity of freſh confiſcations. He appeared, therefore, at the theatre as uſual, and ſeemed to intereſt himſelf as warmly in the conteſt there, as if he had totally forgot that there was a contention for his empire. Being then at Naples, he excuſed himſelf in his letters to the ſenate, for not immediately coming to Rome, as he was detained by an hoarſeneſs which he was afraid to increaſe. The care of his voice was ſtill uppermoſt in his mind, and nothing ſeemed to give him greater uneaſineſs than that Vindex, in his manifeſtoes, ſhould call him a miſerable muſician. He frequently aſked thoſe about him, whether it was poſſible that one who had ſtudied the art ſo long and carefully as he had done, ſhould be the bungler he was repreſented by Vindex.

The circumſtances of the revolt growing more formidable every hour, Nero returned to Rome with a mixture of hope, exultation, and revenge. Obſerving an ancient monument by the way-ſide, on which were the ſtatues of a Roman knight overcoming a Gauliſh ſoldier, he looked upon this as a favourable omen, and was tranſported with pleaſure at the adventure. Upon entering the city, he convened a few of his creatures among the ſenate, and entertained

them, not by deliberations upon the ſtate of his affairs, but by ſhowing them ſome muſical inſtruments that were to be played upon by water. He explained to them their mechaniſm, their advantages, and defects, adding, with an ironical air, "That he hoped, with Vindex's "permiſſion, to exhibit theſe inſtruments upon "the theatre."

The actual revolt of Galba, the news of which arrived ſoon after, affected him in a very different manner. The reputation of that general was ſuch, that from the moment he declared againſt him, Nero conſidered himſelf as undone. He received the account as he was at ſupper, and, inſtantly ſtruck with terror, overturned the table with his foot, breaking two cryſtal vaſes of immenſe value. He then fell into a ſwoon, from which, when he recovered, he tore his clothes, and ſtruck his head, crying out, "that he was utterly undone." It was then that he began to meditate ſlaughters more extenſive than he had yet committed, and tortures yet untried. He was reſolved to maſſacre all the governors of provinces, to deſtroy all exiles, and to murder all the Gauls in Rome, as a puniſhment for the treachery of their countrymen. In ſhort, in the wildneſs of his rage, he thought of poiſoning the whole ſenate, of burning the city, and turning the lions, kept for the purpoſes of the theatre, out upon the

people. Theſe deſigns being impracticable, he reſolved, at laſt, to face the danger in perſon. But his preparations ſerved to mark the infatuation of his mind. His principal care was to provide waggons for the convenient carriage of his muſical inſtruments; and to dreſs out his concubines like Amazons, with whom he intended to face the enemy. He alſo made a reſolution, that if he came off with ſafety and empire, he would appear again upon the theatre with the lute and the water-muſic, and would equip himſelf as a pantomime.

While Nero was thus frivolouſly employed, the revolt became general. Not only the armies in Spain and Gaul, but alſo the legions in Germany, Africa, and Luſitania, declared againſt him. Virginius Rufus alone, who commanded an army on the Upper Rhine, for awhile continued in ſuſpence; during which, his forces, without his permiſſion, falling upon the Gauls, routed them with great ſlaughter, and Vindex ſlew himſelf. But this ill ſucceſs no way advanced the intereſts of Nero; he was ſo deteſted by the whole empire, that he could not procure any aſſiſtance even from the army. He therefore called for Locuſto to furniſh him with poiſon; and thus prepared for the worſt, he retired to the Servilian gardens, with a reſolution of flying into Egypt. He accordingly diſpatched the freedmen, in whom he had the moſt

moſt confidence, to prepare a fleet at Oſtia; and, in the mean while, ſounded in perſon the tribunes and centurions of the guard, to know if they were willing to ſhare his fortunes. Theſe all excuſed themſelves, under divers pretexts. One of them had the boldneſs to anſwer him by part of a line from Virgil: "*Uſque* "*adeone miſerum eſt mori?*—Is death then ſuch "a misfortune?" Thus deſtitute of every reſource, all the expedients that cowardice, revenge, or terror could produce, took place in his mind by turns. He at one time reſolved to take refuge among the Parthians; at another, to deliver himſelf up to the mercy of the inſurgents: one while, he determined to mount the roſtrum, to aſk pardon for what was paſt, and to conclude with a promiſe of amendment for the future. With theſe gloomy deliberations he went to bed, but waking about midnight he was ſurpriſed to find his guards had left him. The prætorian ſoldiers, in fact, having been corrupted by their commander, had retired to their camp, and proclaimed Galba emperor. Nero immediately ſent for his friends, to deliberate upon his preſent exigence, but his friends alſo forſook him; even Tigelinus, on whom he had heaped benefits, and made the partaker of his crimes, had gone over to Galba. He went in perſon from houſe to

houſe, but all the doors were ſhut againſt him, and none were found to anſwer his enquiries.

While he was purſuing this enquiry, his very domeſticks followed the general defection; and, having plundered his apartments, eſcaped different ways. Being now reduced to a ſtate of deſperation, he deſired that one of his favourite gladiators might come and diſpatch him; but even in this requeſt there was none found to obey. "Alas, (cried he) have I neither friend "nor enemy!" And then running deſperately forth, ſeemed reſolved to plunge headlong into the Tiber. But juſt then his courage beginning to fail him, he made a ſudden ſtop, as if willing to recollect his reaſon, and aſked for ſome ſecret place, where he might re-aſſume his courage, and meet death with becoming fortitude. In this diſtreſs, Phaon, one of his freedmen, offered him his country-houſe, about four miles diſtant, where he might, for ſome time, remain concealed. Nero accepted his offer; and half dreſſed as he was, with his head covered, and hiding his face with his handkerchief, he mounted on horſeback, attended by four of his domeſticks, of whom the wretched Sporus was one. His journey, though ſhort, was crowded with adventures. An earthquake gave him the firſt alarm. The lightning from heaven next flaſhed in his face. Round

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he heard nothing but confuſed noiſes from the camp, and the cries of the ſoldiers, imprecating a thouſand evils upon his head. A paſſenger, meeting him on the way, cried, "There "go men in purſuit of Nero." Another aſked him, if there was any news of Nero in the city. His horſe taking fright at a dead body that lay near the road, he dropped his handkerchief, and a ſoldier who was near addreſſed him by name. He therefore quitted his horſe, and, forſaking the high way, entered the thicket that led towards the back part of Phaon's houſe, through which he crept, making the beſt of his way among the reeds and brambles, with which the place was overgrown. When he was arrived at the back part of the houſe, while he was waiting till there ſhould be a breach made in the wall, he took up ſome water in the hollow of his hands from a pool to drink; ſaying, "Theſe are the delicacies of Nero." When the hole was made large enough to admit him, he crept in upon all fours, and took a ſhort repoſe upon a wretched pallet, that had been prepared for his reception. Being preſſed by hunger, he demanded ſomewhat to eat; they brought him a piece of brown bread, which he refuſed; but drank a little water. During this interval, the ſenate finding the prætorian guards had taken part with Galba declared him emperor, and con-

condemned Nero to die, *more majorum*; that is, according to the rigour of the ancient laws.

Theſe dreadful tidings were quickly brought by one of Phaon's ſlaves from the city, while Nero continued lingering between his hopes and his fears. At one time, this moſt wretched of all mankind was employed in providing ſtones for his tomb; at another, in preparing wood and water for his funeral; now repeating verſes, expreſſive of the horrors of his mind; again giving vent to his tears, and crying out, "What an artiſt is the world likely to loſe!" When he was told of the reſolution of the ſenate againſt him, he aſked the meſſenger what was meant by being puniſhed according to the rigour of the ancient laws? To this it was anſwered, that the criminal was to be ſtripped naked, his head was to be fixed in a pillory, and in that poſture he was to be ſcourged to death. Nero was ſo terrified at this, that he ſeiſed two poniards, which he had brought with him, and, examining their points, returned them to their ſheaths, pretending, that the fatal moment was not yet arrived. He then deſired Sporus to begin the lamentations which were uſed at funerals; he next intreated that ſome one of his attendants would die, to give him courage by his example; and afterwards began to reproach his own cowardice,

(crying

(crying out) "Does this become Nero? Is this "trifling well timed? No, no, let me be "courageous." In fact, he had no time to ſpare, for the ſoldiers who had been ſent in purſuit of him were juſt then approaching the houſe: wherefore hearing the ſound of the horſes feet, he ſet a dagger to his throat, with which, by the aſſiſtance of Epaphroditus, his freedman and ſecretary, he gave himſelf a mortal wound. However he was not yet quite dead, when one of the centurions entering the room, and pretending he came to his relief, attempted to ſtop the blood with his cloak. But Nero, regarding him with a ſtern countenance, ſaid, "It is now "too late. Is this your fidelity?" Upon which, with his eyes fixed, and frightfully ſtaring, he expired, even in death a ghaſtly ſpectacle of innoxious tyranny.

Little need be ſaid concerning the character of a monarch, whoſe very name is become a term of reproach to all bad princes. His natural diſpoſition was extremely bad, but it was rendered ſtill more deteſtable by flattery. All orders of men were, at this time, ſo depraved, that each ſeemed eager to contend, which ſhould be moſt inſtrumental in puſhing him on to his exceſſes, and applauding him when he had committed them. It muſt be a ſtrong mind, that being aſſaulted thus on every ſide can ſtand

ſtand unſhaken, and trace out for itſelf the track of undeviating virtue. Thus much, I think, we may ſay of this moſt wretched man, notwithſtanding the concurrent reproach of all hiſtorians, that through the greateſt part of his reign, he himſelf ſeemed ignorant of his being a tyrant.

He reigned thirteen years, ſeven months, and twenty-eight days, and died in the thirty-ſecond year of his age.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

SERGIUS GALBA, the Seventh EMPEROR of ROME.

THE rejoicings at Rome, upon Nero's death, were as great as thoſe upon his acceſſion. All perſons came running into the ſtreets to congratulate each other upon the death of the tyrant; dreſſed in the manner of ſlaves who had been juſt ſet free. U.C. 821. A. D. 69.

Galba was ſeventy-two years old when he was declared emperor, and was then in Spain with his legions. However, he ſoon found that his being raiſed to the throne, was but an inlet to new diſquietudes. His firſt embarraſſment aroſe from a diſorder in his own army; for upon his approaching the camp, one of the wings of his horſe, repenting of their choice, prepared to revolt, and he found it no eaſy matter to reconcile them to their duty. He alſo narrowly eſcaped aſſaſſination, from ſome ſlaves, who were preſented to him by one of Nero's freedmen. The death of Vindex alſo ſerved not a little to add to his diſquietudes; ſo that upon his very acceſſion to the imperial dignity, he had ſome thoughts of putting an end to his own life. But hearing from Rome, that

that Nero was dead, and the empire transferred to him, he immediately aſſumed the title and enſigns of command. In his journey towards Rome he was met by Virginius Rufus, who, finding the ſenate had decreed him the government came to yield him obedience. This general had more than once refuſed the empire himſelf, which was offered him by his ſoldiers, alledging, that the ſenate alone had the diſpoſal of it; and from them only he would accept the honour. Shortly after this, many of thoſe who were moſt notorious during the laſt reign, and who attempted to diſturb the preſent, were cut off. Among theſe were Nymphidius Sabinus, præfect of the prætorian guards at Rome; Fonteius Capito, lieutenant in Germany; and Clodius Macer, pro-conſul in Africa.

Galba having been raiſed to the empire by means of his army, was, at the ſame time, willing to ſuppreſs their power to commit any future diſturbance. His firſt approach to Rome was attended with one of thoſe rigorous ſtrokes of juſtice which ought rather to be defended than imitated. A body of mariners, whom Nero had taken from the oar, and inliſted among the legions, went to meet Galba, three miles from the city, and with loud importunities demanded a confirmation of what his predeceſſor had done in their favour. Galba, who was rigidly attached

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to the ancient diſcipline, deferred their requeſt to another time. But they, conſidering this delay as an equivalent to an abſolute denial, inſiſted upon their requeſt, in a very diſreſpectful manner; and even ſome of them had recourſe to arms: whereupon Galba ordered a body of horſe, attending him, to ride in among them, and thus killed ſeven thouſand of them; but not content with this puniſhment, he afterwards ordered them to be decimated. Their inſolence demanded correction; but ſuch extenſive puniſhments deviated into cruelty. His next ſtep to curb the inſolence of the ſoldiers, was his diſcharging the German cohort, which had been eſtabliſhed by the former emperors as a guard to their perſons. Thoſe he ſent home to their own country, unrewarded, pretending they were diſaffected to his perſon.

He ſeemed to have two other objects alſo in view, namely, to puniſh thoſe vices which had come to an enormous height in the laſt reign, with the ſtricteſt ſeverity; and to repleniſh the treaſury, which had been quite drained by the prodigality of his predeceſſors. Theſe attempts only brought on him the imputation of ſeverity and avarice: the ſtate was too much corrupted to admit of ſuch an immediate tranſition from vice to virtue, as this worthy, but weak politician attempted to effect. The people had long been maintained in ſloth and luxury by the

the prodigality of the former emperors, and could not think of being obliged to ſeek for new means of ſubſiſtence, to retrench their ſuperfluities. They began, therefore, to ſatirize the old man, and turn the ſimplicity of his manners into ridicule. Among the marks of avarice recorded of him, he is ſaid to have groaned upon having an expenſive ſoup ſerved up to his table; he is ſaid to have preſented to his ſteward, for his fidelity, a plate of beans; a famous player upon the flute, named Canus, having greatly delighted him, it is reported, that he drew out his purſe, and gave him five-pence, telling him, that it was private and not public money. By ſuch ill-judged frugalities, at ſuch a a time, Galba began to loſe his popularity; and he who before his acceſſion was eſteemed by all, now being become emperor, was conſidered with ridicule and contempt.

But there are ſome circumſtances of avarice alledged againſt him, leſs equivocal than thoſe trifling ones already mentioned. Shortly after his coming to Rome the people were preſented with a moſt grateful ſpectacle; which was that of Locuſta, Elius, Polycletus, Patronius, and Petinus, all the bloody miniſters of Nero's cruelty, drawn in fetters through the city and publickly executed. But Tigelinus, the moſt notorious offender of all, was not there. This crafty villain had taken care for his own ſafety, by

by the largeneſs of his bribes; and though the people cried out for vengeance againſt him, at the theatre, and the circus, yet the emperor granted him his life and pardon. Helotus the eunuch, alſo, who had been the inſtrument of poiſoning Claudius, eſcaped, and owed his ſafety to the proper application of his wealth.

This colluſion, however, was owing rather to the avarice of Galba's favourites than to his; for, whether from the infirmity of age, or the multiplicity of buſineſs, he now ſuffered himſelf to be entirely governed by three favourites; who, being continually in his preſence, were commonly ſtiled his maſters. Theſe were, Titus Venius, who had been his lieutenant in Spain, a man of inſatiable avarice; Caius Laco, whom he had made præfect of the prætorian bands, and Icelus, his freedman, who aſpired at the higheſt command in the equeſtrian order. Theſe three, very different in their diſpoſitions, influenced the emperor to oppoſite purſuits; and only agreed in one point, that of abuſing his confidence. Thus by the inequality of his conduct, he became deſpicable to his ſubjects. At one time, ſhowing himſelf ſevere and frugal; at another, remiſs and prodigal; condemning ſome illuſtrious perſons, without any hearing; and pardoning others, though guilty; in ſhort, nothing was done but by the mediation of theſe favourites; all offices

were venal, and all puniſhments redeemable by money.

Affairs were in this unſettled poſture at Rome, while the provinces were yet in a worſe condition. The ſucceſs of the army in Spain in chooſing an emperor, induced the legions in other parts to wiſh for a ſimilar opportunity. Accordingly, many ſeditions were kindled, and ſeveral factions promoted in different parts of the empire, but particularly in Germany. There were then, in that province, two Roman armies: the one, which had lately attempted to make Rufus Virginius emperor, as has been already mentioned, and which was commanded by his lieutenant; the other, commanded by Vitellius, who long had an ambition to obtain the empire for himſelf. The former of theſe armies, deſpiſing their preſent general, and conſidering themſelves as ſuſpected by the emperor, for having been the laſt to acknowledge his title, reſolved now to be foremoſt in denying it. Accordingly, when they were ſummoned to take the oaths of homage and fidelity, they refuſed to acknowledge any other commands but thoſe of the ſenate. This refuſal they backed by a meſſage to the prætorian bands, importing, that they were reſolved not to acquieſce in the election of an emperor created in Spain; and deſiring that the ſenate ſhould proceed to a new choice.

Galba,

Galba, being informed of theſe commotions, was ſenſible, that, beſides his age, he was leſs reſpected for want of an heir. He reſolved, therefore, to put what he had formerly deſigned in execution, and to adopt ſome perſon, whoſe virtues might deſerve ſuch advancement, and protect his declining age from danger. His favourites underſtanding his determination, inſtantly reſolved on giving him an heir of their own chooſing; ſo that there aroſe a great contention among them upon this occaſion. Otho made warm application for himſelf, alledging the great ſervices he had done the emperor, as being the firſt man of note who came to his aſſiſtance, when he had declared againſt Nero. However, Galba, being fully reſolved to conſult the public good alone, rejected his ſuit; and on a day appointed, ordered Piſo Lucinianus to attend him. The character given by hiſtorians of Piſo, is, that he was every way worthy of the honour deſigned. He was no way related to Galba; and had no other intereſt but merit to recommend him to his favour. Taking this youth, therefore, by the hand, in the preſence of his friends, he adopted him to ſucceed in the empire, giving him the moſt wholeſome leſſons for guiding his future conduct. Piſo's conduct ſhowed that he was highly deſerving this diſtinction: in all his deportment there appeared ſuch modeſty, firmneſs, and equality of mind,

as beſpoke him rather capable of diſcharging, than ambitious of obtaining, his preſent dignity. But the army and the ſenate did not ſeem equally diſintereſted upon this occaſion; they had been ſo long uſed to bribery and corruption that they could now bear no emperor, who was not in a capacity of ſatisfying their avarice. The adoption, therefore, of Piſo, was but coldly received; for his virtues were no recommendation in a nation of univerſal depravity.

Otho, finding his hopes of adoption wholly fruſtrated, and ſtill further ſtimulated by the intolerable load of debt which he had contracted by his riotous way of living, reſolved upon obtaining the empire by force, ſince he could not by peaceable ſucceſſion. In fact, his circumſtances were ſo very deſperate, that he was heard to ſay, that it was equal to him whether he fell by his enemies in the field, or by his creditors in the city. He, therefore, raiſed a moderate ſum of money, by ſelling his intereſt to a perſon who wanted a place; and with this, bribed two ſubaltern officers in the prætorian bands; ſupplying the deficiency of his largeſſes by promiſes and plauſible pretences. Having, in this manner, in leſs than eight days corrupted the fidelity of the ſoldiers, he ſtole ſecretly from the emperor, while he was ſacrificing; and aſſembling the ſoldiers, in a ſhort ſpeech, urged the cruelties, and the avarice of

Galba,

Galba. Finding his invectives received with univerſal ſhouts by the army, he entirely threw off the maſk and avowed his intentions of dethroning him. The ſoldiers being ripe for ſedition, immediately ſeconded his views, and taking Otho upon their ſhouldiers, declared him emperor; and, to ſtrike the citizens with terror, carried him, with their ſwords drawn, into the camp.

Galba, in the mean time, being informed of the revolt of the army, ſeemed utterly confounded, and in want of ſufficient reſolution to face an event, which he ſhould have long foreſeen. In this manner the poor old man continued wavering and doubtful; till, at laſt, being deluded by a falſe report of Otho's being ſlain, he rode into the forum in complete armour and attended by many of his followers. Juſt at the ſame inſtant, a body of horſe, ſent from the camp to deſtroy him, entered on the oppoſite ſide, and each party prepared for the encounter. For ſome time hoſtilities were ſuſpended on each ſide; Galba being confuſed and irreſolute; and his antagoniſts ſtruck with horrour at the baſeneſs of their enterpriſe. At length, however, finding the emperor in ſome meaſure deſerted by his adherents, they ruſhed in upon him, trampling the crowds of people that then filled the Forum, under foot. Galba, ſeein them approach, ſeemed to recollect all

his former fortitude; and bending his head forward, bid the aſſaſſin ſtrike it off, if it were for the good of the people. This was quickly performed; and his head being ſet upon the point of a lance, was preſented to Otho, who ordered it to be contemptuouſly carried round the camp: his body remaining in the ſtreets, till it was buried by one of his ſlaves. He
A.D.46. died in the ſeventy-third year of his age, after a ſhort reign of ſeven months; as illuſtrious by his own virtues, as it was contaminated by the vices of his favourites, who ſhared in his downfall.

CHAP. IX.

OTHO, the Eighth EMPEROR of ROME.

NO ſooner was Galba thus murdered, than the ſenate and people ran in crowds to the camp, contending who ſhould be foremoſt in extolling the virtues of the new emperor, and depreſſing the character of him they had ſo unjuſtly deſtroyed. Each laboured to excel the reſt in his inſtances of homage; and the leſs his affections were for him, the more did he indulge all the vehemence of exaggerated praiſe. Otho finding himſelf ſurrounded by congratulating

lating multitudes, immediately repaired to the ſenate, where he received the titles uſually given to the emperors; and from thence returned to the palace, ſeemingly reſolved to reform his life, and aſſume manners becoming the greatneſs of his ſtation.

He began his reign by a ſignal inſtance of clemency, in pardoning Marius Celſus, who had been highly favoured by Galba; and not contented with barely forgiving, he advanced him to the higheſt honours; aſſerting, that "fidelity deſerved every reward." This act of clemency was followed by another of juſtice, equally agreeable to the people. Tigellinus, Nero's favourite, who had been the promoter of all his cruelties, was now put to death; and all ſuch as had been unjuſtly baniſhed, or ſtripped, at his inſtigation, during Nero's reign, were reſtored to their country and fortunes.

In the mean time, the legions in Lower Germany, having been purchaſed by the large gifts and ſpecious promiſes of Vitellius their general, were at length induced to proclaim him emperor; and, regardleſs of the ſenate, they declared that they had an equal right to appoint to that high ſtation, with the cohorts at Rome. The news of this conduct in the army, ſoon ſpread conſternation throughout the city; but Otho was particularly ſtruck with the account,

as being apprehenſive, that nothing but the blood of his countrymen could decide a conteſt, of which his own ambition only was the cauſe. Of all characters in hiſtory, Otho's ſeems the only one which was mended by advancement; for we now find Otho the emperor very different from himſelf when in a private ſtation; he was, in the former period, weak, vicious, and debauched; but upon the preſent occaſion, he appears courageous, benevolent, and humane. He now therefore ſought to come to an agreement with Vitellius; but this not ſucceeding, both ſides began their preparations for war. However, all things ſeemed to be unfavourable to Otho. The chief of the ſenate were grown old and impotent; the rich men of Rome were indolent and ſlothful; the knights had long been diſſolved in eaſe and luxury; and the cohorts themſelves were relaxed from the military diſcipline of their anceſtors. News being received that Vitellius was upon his march to Italy, Otho departed from Rome with a vaſt army to oppoſe him. But though he was very powerful with regard to numbers, his men being but little uſed to war could not be relied on. He ſeemed, by his behaviour, ſenſible of the diſproportion of the forces; and is ſaid to have been tortured with frightful dreams, and the moſt diſmal apprehenſions. It is alſo reported by ſome, that one night, fetching

many

many profound ſighs in his ſleep, his ſervants ran haſtily to his bed-ſide, and found him ſtretched on the ground. He alledged, he had ſeen the ghoſt of Galba, which had, in a threatening manner beat and puſhed him rudely from the bed; and he afterwards uſed many expiations to appeaſe it. However this be, he proceeded with a great ſhow of courage, till he arrived at the city of Brixellum, on the river Po, where he remained; ſending his forces before him, under the conduct of his generals Suetonius and Celſus, who made what haſte they could to give the enemy battle. The army of Vitellius, which conſiſted of ſeventy thouſand men, was commanded by his generals Valens and Cecina, he himſelf remaining in Gaul, in order to bring up the reſt of his forces. Thus both ſides haſtened to meet each other with ſo much animoſity and precipitation, that three conſiderable battles were fought in the ſpace of three days. One near Placentia, another near Cremona, and a third, at a place called Caſtor; in all which, Otho and the Romans had the advantage. But theſe ſucceſſes were but of ſhort continuance, for Valens and Cecina, who had hitherto acted ſeparately, joining their forces, and re-enforcing their armies with freſh ſupplies, reſolved to come to a general engagement. Otho, who by this time had joined his army, at a little village called Bebriacum,

Bebriacum, finding the enemy, notwithſtanding their late loſſes, inclined to come to a battle, reſolved to call a council of war to determine upon the proper meaſures to be taken. His generals were of opinion to protract the war: but others, whoſe inexperience had given them cauſeleſs confidence, declared, that nothing but a battle could relieve the miſeries of the ſtate; proteſting that fortune, and all the Gods, with the divinity of the emperor himſelf, favoured the deſign, and would, undoubtedly, proſper the enterprize. In this advice Otho acquieſced: he had been for ſome time ſo uneaſy under the war, that he ſeemed willing to exchange ſuſpence for danger. However, he was ſo ſurrounded by flatterers, that he was prohibited from being perſonally preſent in the engagement, but prevailed upon to reſerve himſelf for the fortune of the empire, and wait the event at Brixellum. The affairs of both armies being thus adjuſted, they came to an engagement at Bebriacum; where, in the beginning, thoſe on the ſide of Otho ſeemed to have the advantage, and, at the firſt onſet, ſlew all the firſt rank and won the eagle, which was conſidered as a certain preſage of victory. Both armies were extremely encumbered with trees and hedges; ſo that they were obliged to fight with very little regularity, and the engagement ſeemed a tumultuary oppoſition of

forces,

forces, without a plan, and without a commander. At length, however, the ſuperior diſcipline of the legions of Vitellius turned the ſcale of victory. They, after ſome time, formed themſelves from a ſtate of apparent confuſion, and attacking the enemy in flank, gained a ſignal and deciſive victory. Otho's army fled in great confuſion towards Bebriacum, being purſued with great ſlaughter all the way.

In the mean time, Otho waited for the news of the battle with great impatience, and ſeemed to tax his meſſengers with delay. The firſt account of his defeat was brought him by a common ſoldier, who had eſcaped from the field of battle. Otho, who was ſtill ſurrounded by flatterers, was deſired to give no credit to a baſe fugitive, who was guilty of falſehood, only to cover his own cowardice. The ſoldier, however, ſtill perſiſted in the veracity of his report; and, finding none inclined to believe him, immediately fell upon his ſword, and expired at the emperor's feet. Otho was ſo much ſtruck with the death of this faithful ſentinel, that he cried out, that he would cauſe the ruin of no more ſuch valiant and worthy ſoldiers, but would end the conteſt the ſhorteſt way. It was in vain, therefore, that his followers gathered round him, endeavouring to revive his hopes, and inſpire him with freſh ambition; in vain did thoſe, who were too

diſtant

diſtant to be heard, lift up their hands to beſeech him; he was deaf to all their intreaties; he had formed a reſolution to die, as the only means of ridding himſelf of his cares, and his country of its calamities. Having, therefore, given the ſignal for ſpeaking, he addreſſed the ſhattered remains of his army with great intrepidity. "I eſteem (cried he) this day, "as far more glorious than that of my elec- "tion, ſince it has convinced me of your fide- "lity and affection. I muſt, however, intreat "for one favour more; which is, to die, in "order to procure your ſafety: I can never ſo "much advance the intereſts of my country "by war and blood, as by ſacrificing myſelf "for its peace. Others have purchaſed fame "by governing well: let it be my boaſt to "leave an empire, rather than, by my ambi- "tion, to weaken or deſtroy it." After ſpeaking to this effect, he intreated his followers to yield themſelves to Vitellius, and not provoke him by obſtinacy or delay. Then rebuking the unreaſonable fears of thoſe about him, without any ſigns of fear, either in his looks or words, he retired to his chamber: there he wrote two conſolatory letters to his ſiſter, and a third to Meſſalina, whom he had deſigned for his wife. He next burnt ſuch letters and papers as might be prejudicial to his dependents, and diſtributed ſome money and jewels among his friends and

domeſticks. He then prepared to die; but perceiving a tumult among the ſoldiers, who prepared to puniſh ſome that were going privately away; he cried out, "Let me then add one "day more to my life." Upon which he ordered his chamber-door to be thrown open, and employed the remaining part of the day in hindering the violence of his ſoldiers, and giving advice to all ſuch as deſired admittance. Having thus performed the duties of his ſtation, and having quenched his thirſt with a draught of cold water, he ordered the doors to be ſecured. He then took two daggers, and having tried and choſen the ſharpeſt, he laid it under his pillow, and fell into a profound ſleep. Awaking by break of day, he perceived one of his ſervants remaining in the room, whom he commanded to retire. Then taking the dagger, he gave himſelf a mortal blow on the left ſide, and with a ſingle groan ended his life, after a ſhort reign of three months and five days.

There is ſomething in the concluſion of this prince's reign, that ſeems to atone for the vile methods by which he acquired dominion. His clemency and juſtice, while he continued on the throne, and the calm manner in which he reſigned it, make us almoſt regret his wanting an opportunity to diſplay his newly acquired virtues with more permanent luſtre.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

VITELLIUS, the Ninth EMPEROR of ROME.

IT was no ſooner known that Otho had killed himſelf, than all the ſoldiers repaired to Virginius, the commander of the German legions, earneſtly intreating him to aſſume the reins of government; or, at leaſt, intreating his mediation with the generals of Vitellius in their favour. Upon his declining their requeſt, Rubrius Gallus, a perſon of conſiderable note, immediately undertook their embaſſy to the generals of the conquering army, and ſoon after obtained pardon for all the adherents of Otho.

Vitellius was immediately after declared emperor by the ſenate, and received the marks of diſtinction, which were now accuſtomed to follow the appointments of the ſtrongeſt ſide. At the ſame time Italy was ſeverely embarraſſed by the ſoldiers, who committed ſuch outrages, as exceeded all the oppreſſions of the moſt calamitous war. Vitellius, who was yet in Gaul, reſolved, before he ſet out for Rome, to puniſh the prætorian cohorts, who had been the inſtruments of all the late diſturbances in the ſtate.

He

He therefore cauſed them to be diſarmed, and deprived of the name and honour of ſoldiers. He ordered alſo an hundred and fifty of thoſe who were moſt guilty, to be put to death.

Theſe bright beginnings, however, were ſoon ſhaded by his vices and extravagance. As he approached towards Rome, he paſſed through the towns with all imaginable ſplendour; his paſſage by water was in painted galleys, adorned with garlands of flowers, and profuſely furniſhed with the greateſt delicacies. In his journey there neither was order or diſcipline among his ſoldiers; they plundered wherever they came with impunity, and he ſeemed no way diſpleaſed at the licentiouſneſs of their behaviour. Upon his arrival on the field where the battle was fought, which put him in poſſeſſion of the empire, obſerving the great number of dead bodies ſcattered over the plain, men and horſes confuſedly intermixed, putrefying, and tainting the air with their ſtench, he ſeemed no way ſhocked at the ſpectacle; but obſerved to thoſe about him, that a dead enemy ſmelt well; and then calling for wine, he drank upon the field, and ordered large quantities to be diſtributed among his ſoldiers.

Upon his arrival at Rome, he entered the city, not as a place he came to govern with juſtice, but as a town that was become his own by the laws of conqueſt. He marched through

the ſtreets, mounted on horſeback, all in armour, the ſenate and people going before him as if the captives of his late victory. He the next day made the ſenate a ſpeech, in which he magnified his own actions, and promiſed them extraordinary advantages from his adminiſtration. He next harangued the people, who being now long accuſtomed to flatter all in authority, highly applauded, and bleſſed their new emperor.

In the mean time, his ſoldiers being permitted to ſatiate themſelves in the debaucheries of the city, grew totally unfit for war. The principal affairs of the ſtate were managed by the loweſt wretches, whom fortune, in her capricious moments, ſeemed pleaſed with exalting. Aſiaticus, his freedman, attended by a groupe of players and charioteers, governed all things, and brought virtue into diſrepute by their vicious example. Vitellius, more abandoned than they, gave himſelf up to all kinds of luxury and profuſeneſs; but gluttony was his favourite vice; ſo that he brought himſelf to an habit of vomiting, in order to be able to renew his meals at pleaſure. His entertainments, though ſeldom at his own coſt, were prodigiouſly expenſive; he frequently invited himſelf to the tables of his ſubjects, breakfaſting with one, dining with another, and ſupping with a third, all in the ſame day. The moſt memorable

rable of theſe entertainments; was, that made for him by his brother, on his arrival at Rome. In this were ſerved up two thouſand ſeveral diſhes of fiſh, and ſeven thouſand fowl of the moſt valuable kinds. But in one particular diſh he ſeemed to have outdone all the former profuſion of the moſt luxurious Romans. This diſh, which was of ſuch magnitude as to be called the ſhield of Minerva, was filled with an olio made from the ſounds of the fiſh called ſcarri, the brains of pheaſants and woodcocks, the tongues of the moſt coſtly birds, and the ſpawn of lampreys brought from the Carpathian ſea. In order to cook this diſh properly, a furnace was built in the fields, as it was too large for any kitchen to contain it.

In this manner did this beaſtly creature proceed, ſpending his time in the moſt groſs ſenſualities; ſo that Joſephus tells us, that if he had reigned long, the whole empire would not have been ſufficient to have maintained his gluttony. All the attendants of his courts ſought to raiſe themſelves, not by their virtue or abilities, but the ſumptuouſneſs of their entertainments. This prodigality produced its attendant, want; and that, in turn, gave riſe to cruelty.

Thoſe, who had formerly been his aſſociates, were now deſtroyed without mercy. Going to viſit one of them in a violent fever, he mingled

poiſon with his water, and delivered it to him with his own hands. He never pardoned thoſe money-lenders who came to demand payment of his former debts. One of the number coming to ſalute him, he immediately ordered him to be carried off to execution; but ſhortly after, commanding him to be brought back, when all his attendants thought it was to pardon the unhappy creditor, Vitellius gave them ſoon to underſtand, that it was merely to have the pleaſure of feeding his eyes with his torments. Having condemned another to death, he executed his two ſons with him, only for their preſuming to intercede for their father. A Roman knight being dragged away to execution, and crying out, that he had made the emperor his heir, Vitellius demanded to ſee the will, where finding himſelf joint heir with another, he ordered both to be executed, that he might enjoy the legacy without a partner.

By the continuance of ſuch vices and cruelties as theſe, he became not only a burthen to himſelf, but odious to all mankind. The aſtrologers, a ſet of people who ſeldom fail to foretell the ruin of one, whoſe whole ſtudy it is to become inimical to the world, began by prognoſticating his downfall. A writing was ſet up in the Forum to this effect, "We, in the name "of the ancient Chaldæans, give Vitellius "warning to depart this life by the calends

"of

" of October." Vitellius, on his part, received their information with terror, and ordered all the aſtrologers to be baniſhed from Rome. An old woman having foretold, that, if he ſurvived his mother, he ſhould reign many years in happineſs and ſecurity, this gave him a deſire of putting her to death; which he did, by refuſing her ſuſtenance, under pretence of its being prejudicial to her health. But he ſoon ſaw the futility of relying upon ſuch vain prognoſtications; for his ſoldiers, by their cruelty and rapine, having become inſupportable to the inhabitants of Rome, the legions of the Eaſt, who had at firſt acquieſced in his dominion, began to revolt; and, ſhortly after, unanimouſly reſolved to make Veſpaſian emperor.

Veſpaſian, who was appointed commander againſt the rebellious Jews, had reduced moſt of their country, except Jeruſalem, to ſubjection. The death of Nero, however, had at firſt interrupted the progreſs of his arms; and the ſucceſſion of Galba gave a temporary check to his conqueſts, as he was obliged to ſend his ſon Titus to Rome, to receive that emperor's commands. Titus, however, was ſo long detained by contrary winds, that he received the news of Galba's death before he ſet ſail. He then reſolved to continue neuter, during the civil wars between Otho and Vitellius; and when the latter prevailed, he gave him his ho-

mage with reluctance. But being deſirous of acquiring reputation, though he diſliked the government, he determined to lay ſiege to Jeruſalem, and actually made preparations for that great undertaking, when he was given to underſtand, that Vitellius was deteſted by all ranks in the empire. Theſe murmurings increaſed every day; while Veſpaſian ſecretly endeavoured to advance the diſcontents of his army. By theſe means they began, at length, to fix their eyes upon him as a perſon the moſt capable and willing to terminate the miſeries of his country, and put a period to the injuries it ſuffered. Not only the legions under his command, but thoſe in Mæſia and Pannonia came to the ſame reſolution, ſo that they declared themſelves for Veſpaſian. He was alſo, without his own conſent, proclaimed emperor at Alexandria, the army there confirming their ſuffrages with extraordinary applauſe, and paying their accuſtomed homage. Still, however, Veſpaſian ſeemed to decline the honours done him; till, at length, his ſoldiers compelled him, with their threats of immediate death, to accept a title, which, in all probability, he wiſhed to enjoy. He now, therefore, called a council of war, where it was reſolved, That his ſon Titus ſhould carry on the war againſt the Jews; and that Mutianus, one of his generals, ſhould with the greateſt part of his legions, enter Italy; while

while Veſpaſian ſhould levy forces in all parts of the Eaſt, in order to reinforce them, in caſe of neceſſity.

During theſe preparations, Vitellius, though buried in ſloth and luxury, was reſolved to make an effort to defend the empire; wherefore his chief commanders, Valens and Cecina, were ordered to make all poſſible preparations to reſiſt the invaders. The firſt army that entered Italy with an hoſtile intention, was under the command of Antonius Primus, who was met by Cecina near Cremona. A battle was expected to enſue; but a negociation taking place, Cecina was prevailed upon to change ſides, and declare for Veſpaſian. His army, however, quickly repented of what they had done; and impriſoning their general, attacked Antonius, though without a leader. The engagement continued during the whole night; and in the morning, after a ſhort repaſt, both armies engaged a ſecond time; when the ſoldiers of Antonius ſaluting the riſing ſun, according to cuſtom, the Vitellians, ſuppoſing that they had received new reinforcements, betook themſelves to flight with the loſs of thirty thouſand men. Shortly after, freeing their general Cecina from priſon, they prevailed upon him to intercede with the conquerors for pardon; which they obtained, though not without the moſt horrid barbarities committed

mitted upon the citizens of Cremona, whither they had retired for ſhelter.

In the mean time, Vitellius was wallowing in all kinds of luxury and exceſs. However, when informed of the defeat of his army, his former inſolence was converted into an extreme of timidity and irreſolution. At length, rouſing from his lethargy of protracted vice, he commanded Julius Priſcus, and Alphenus Varus, with ſome forces that were in readineſs, to guard the paſſes of the Appenines, to prevent the enemy's march to Rome; reſerving the principal body of his army, to ſecure the city, under the command of his brother Lucius. But being perſuaded to repair to his army in perſon, his preſence only ſerved to increaſe the contempt of his ſoldiers. He there appeared irreſolute, and ſtill luxurious; without counſel or conduct; ignorant of war, and demanding from others thoſe inſtructions which it was his duty to give. After a ſhort continuance in the camp, and underſtanding the revolt of his fleet, he returned once more to Rome, ever fearful of the laſt blow, and always careleſs as to the principal object of his concern. Every day, however, only ſerved to render his affairs ſtill more deſperate; till, at laſt, he made offers to Veſpaſian of reſigning the empire, provided his life were ſpared, and a ſufficient revenue allotted for his ſupport. In order

order to enforce this requeſt, he iſſued from his palace in deep mourning, with all his domeſticks weeping round him. He then went to offer the ſword of juſtice to Cecilius, the conſul; which he refuſing, the abject emperor prepared to lay down the enſigns of empire in the temple of Concord. But being interrupted by ſome, who cried out, That himſelf was Concord, he reſolved, upon ſo weak an encouragement, ſtill to maintain his power, and immediately prepared for his defence.

During this fluctuation of counſels, one Sabinus, who had adviſed Vitellius to reſign, perceiving his deſperate ſituation, reſolved, by a bold ſtep, to oblige Veſpaſian; and accordingly ſeiſed upon the Capitol. But he was premature in his attempt; for the ſoldiers of Vitellius attacked him with great fury; and prevailing by their numbers, ſoon laid that beautiful building in aſhes. During this dreadful conflagration, Vitellius was feaſting in the palace of Tiberius, and beholding all the horrors of the aſſault with great ſatisfaction. Sabinus was taken priſoner; and ſhortly after executed by the emperor's command. Young Domitian, his nephew, who was afterwards emperor, eſcaped by flight, in the habit of a prieſt; and all the reſt who ſurvived the fire were put to the ſword.

But this tranſient gleam of ſucceſs ſerved little to improve the affairs of Vitellius; he vainly ſent meſſenger after meſſenger, to bring Veſpaſian's general, Antonius, to a compoſition: this commander gave no anſwer to his requeſts, but ſtill continued his march towards Rome. Being arrived before the walls of the city, the forces of Vitellius were reſolved upon defending it to the utmoſt extremity. It was attacked on three ſides with the utmoſt fury; while the army within, ſallying upon the beſiegers, defended it with equal obſtinacy. The battle laſted a whole day; till, at laſt, the beſieged were driven into the city, and a dreadful ſlaughter made of them in all the ſtreets which they vainly attempted to defend. In the mean time, the citizens ſtood by, looking on as both ſides fought; and, as if they had been in a theatre, clapped their hands; at one time encouraging one party, and again the other. As either turned their backs, the citizens would then fall upon them in their places of refuge, and ſo kill and plunder them without mercy. But what was ſtill more remarkable, during theſe dreadful ſlaughters, both within and without the city, the people could not be prevented from celebrating one of their moſt riotous feaſts, called the Saturnalia; ſo that at one time might have been ſeen a ſtrange mixture of mirth and miſery; of cruelty and lewdneſs;

neſs; in one place, buryings and ſlaughters; in another, drunkenneſs and feaſting; here ſtreams of blood, and heaps of mangled bodies; there lewd debaucheries and ſhameleſs ſtrumpets; in a word, all the horrors of a civil war, and all the licentiouſneſs of the moſt abandoned ſecurity.

During this complicated ſcene of miſery, Vitellius, who had been the cauſe of it all, retired privately to his wife's houſe, upon Mount Aventine, deſigning that night to fly to the army commanded by his brother at Tarracina: but quite incapable, through fear, of forming any reſolution, he changed his mind, and returned again to his palace, now void and deſolate; all his ſlaves forſaking him in his diſtreſs, and purpoſely avoiding his preſence.—There, after wandering for ſome time, quite diſconſolate, and fearing the face of every creature; he hid himſelf in an obſcure corner; from whence he was ſoon taken by a party of the conquering ſoldiers. Still, however, willing to add a few hours more to his miſerable life, he begged to be kept in priſon till the arrival of Veſpaſian at Rome, pretending that he had ſecrets of importance to diſcover. But his intreaties were in vain: the ſoldiers binding his hands behind him, and throwing an halter round his neck, led him along, half naked, into the public Forum, loading him, as they proceeded,

ceeded, with all thoſe bitter reproaches their malice could ſuggeſt, or his own cruelty might deſerve. They alſo tied his hair backwards, as was uſual with the moſt infamous malefactors; and held the point of his ſword under his chin, to prevent his hiding his face from the public.—Some caſt dirt and filth upon him as he paſſed; others ſtruck him with their hands; ſome ridiculed the defects of his perſon, his red fiery face, and the greatneſs of his belly. At length, being come to the place of puniſhment, they killed him with many blows; and then dragging the dead body through the ſtreets with an hook, they threw it, with all poſſible ignominy, into the Tyber.

Such was the merited end of this brutal emperor, in the fifty-ſeventh year of his age, after a ſhort reign of eight months and five days; ſo that Plutarch compares this emperor, and his two predeceſſors, to the kings in tragedies, who juſt appear upon the ſtage, and then are deſtroyed. Vitellius ſeemed the only tyrant who entered upon his command with cruelty: Nero and Caligula gave the beginnings of their reign to mercy and juſtice: but this monſter was firſt advanced for his vices; began his government with cruelty; continued it with univerſal deteſtation; and died, to the ſatisfaction of all mankind.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

VESPASIAN, the Tenth EMPEROR of ROME.

VITELLIUS being now no more, the conquering army purſued the enemy throughout the whole city, while neither houſes nor temples afforded refuge to the fugitives. The ſtreets and public places were all ſtrewed with dead; each man lying ſlain where it was his misfortune to be overtaken by his unmerciful purſuers. But not only the enemy ſuffered in this manner; but many of the citizens, who were obnoxious to the ſoldiers, were dragged from their houſes, and killed without any form of tryal. The heat of the reſentment being ſomewhat abated, they next began to ſeek for plunder; and, under pretence of ſearching for the enemy, left no place without marks of their rage or rapacity. Beſides the ſoldiers, the lower rabble joined in theſe deteſtable outrages; ſome of the baſeſt ſlaves came and diſcovered the riches of their maſters; ſome were detected by their neareſt friends; the whole city was filled with outcry and lamentation; inſomuch, that the former ravages of Otho and Vitellius were now conſidered as ſlight evils.

At

At length, however, upon the arrival of Mutianus, general to Veſpaſian, theſe ſlaughters ceaſed, and the ſtate began to wear an appearance of former tranquillity. Veſpaſian was declared emperor, by the unanimous conſent, both of the ſenate and the army; and dignified with all thoſe titles, which now followed rather the power than the merit of thoſe who were appointed to govern. Meſſengers were deſpatched to him in Egypt, deſiring his return, and teſtifying the utmoſt deſire for his government. But the winter being dangerous for ſailing, he deferred his voyage to a more convenient ſeaſon. Perhaps, alſo, the diſſentions in other parts of the empire, retarded his return to Rome; for Claudius Civilis, in Lower Germany, excited his countrymen to revolt; and deſtroyed the Roman garriſons, which were placed in different parts of that province. Yet to give his rebellion an air of juſtice, he cauſed his army to ſwear allegiance to Veſpaſian, until he found himſelf in a condition to throw off the maſk. When he thought himſelf ſufficiently powerful, he diſclaimed all ſubmiſſion to the Roman government, and having overcome one or two of the lieutenants of the empire, and being joined by ſuch of the Romans as refuſed obedience to the new emperor, he boldly advanced to give Cerealis, Veſpaſian's general, battle. In the beginning

of this engagement he ſeemed ſucceſsful, breaking the Roman legions, and putting their cavalry to flight. But, at length, Cerealis, by his conduct, turned the fate of the day, and not only routed the enemy, but took and deſtroyed their camp. This engagement, however, was not deciſive; ſeveral others enſued with doubtful ſucceſs. An accommodation, at length, determined what arms could not effect. Civilis obtained peace for his countrymen, and pardon for himſelf; for the Roman empire was, at this time, ſo torn by its own diviſions, that the barbarous nations around made incurſions with impunity, and were ſure of obtaining peace, whenever they thought proper to demand it.

During the time of theſe commotions in Germany, the Sarmatians, a barbarous nation to the north-eaſt of the empire, ſuddenly paſſed the river Iſther, and marching into the Roman dominions with celerity and fury, deſtroyed ſeveral garriſons, and an army under the command of Fonteius Agrippa. However, they were driven back, with ſome ſlaughter, by Rubrius Gallus, Veſpaſian's lieutenant, into their native foreſts; where ſeveral attempts were made to confine them by garriſons and forts, placed along the confines of their country. But theſe hardy nations, having once found the way into the empire, never after deſiſted from

from invading it at every opportunity; till, at length, they over-ran and deſtroyed the glory of Rome.

Veſpaſian continued ſome months at Alexandria, in Egypt, where, it is ſaid, he cured a blind and a lame man by touching them. Before he ſet out for Rome, he gave his ſon Titus the command of the army that was to lay ſiege to Jeruſalem; while he went forward, and was met many miles from Rome by all the ſenate, and near half the inhabitants, who gave the ſincereſt teſtimonies of their joy, in having an emperor of ſuch great and experienced virtues. Nor did he, in the leaſt, diſappoint their expectations; being equally aſſiduous in rewarding merit, and pardoning his adverſaries; in reforming the manners of the citizens, and, ſetting them the beſt example in his own.

In the mean time, Titus carried on the war againſt the Jews with vigour. This obſtinate and infatuated people had long reſolved to reſiſt the Roman power, vainly hoping to find protection from Heaven, which their impieties had utterly offended. Their own hiſtorian repreſents them, as arrived at the higheſt pitch of iniquity; while famines, earthquakes, and prodigies, all conſpired to forebode their approaching ruin. Nor was it ſufficient that Heaven and earth ſeemed combined againſt them; they had the moſt bitter diſſentions among themſelves;

and

and were ſplit into two parties, who robbed and deſtroyed each other with impunity; ſtill pillaging, and, at the ſame time, boaſting their zeal for the religion of their anceſtors.

At the head of one of thoſe parties was an incendiary, whoſe name was John. This fanatick affected ſovereign power, and filled the whole city of Jeruſalem, and all the towns around, with tumult and pillage. In a ſhort time, a new faction aroſe, headed by one Simon, who gathering together multitudes of robbers and murderers, who had fled to the mountains, attacked many cities and towns, and reduced all Idumea under his power. Jeruſalem, at length, became the theatre in which theſe two demagogues began to exerciſe their mutual animoſity; John was poſſeſſed of the temple, while Simon was admitted into the city; both equally enraged againſt each other; while ſlaughter and devaſtation followed their pretenſions. Thus did a city, formerly celebrated for peace and unity, become a ſeat of tumult and confuſion.

It was in this miſerable ſituation that Titus came to ſit down before it with his conquering army, and began his operations within about ſix furlongs of the place. It was at the feaſt of the Paſſover, when the place was filled with an infinite multitude of people, who had come from all parts to celebrate that great ſolemnity, that Titus undertook to beſiege it. His pre-

ſence produced a temporary reconciliation between the contending factions within; ſo that they unanimouſly reſolved to oppoſe the common enemy firſt, and then decide their domeſtick quarrels at a more convenient ſeaſon. Their firſt ſally, which was made with much fury and reſolution, put the Romans into great diſorder, and obliged them to abandon their camp, and fly to the mountains. However, rallying immediately after, the Jews were forced back into the city; while Titus, in perſon, ſhowed ſurpriſing inſtances of valour and conduct.

Theſe advantages over the Romans, only renewed in the beſieged their deſires of private vengeance. A tumult enſued in the temple, in which ſeveral of both parties were ſlain: and in this manner, upon every remiſſion from without, the factions of John and Simon violently raged againſt each other within; agreeing only in their reſolution to defend the city againſt the Romans.

Jeruſalem was ſtrongly fortified by three walls on every ſide, except where it was fenced by deep vallies. Titus began by battering down the outward wall, which, after much fatigue and danger, he effected; all the time ſhowing the greateſt clemency to the Jews, and offering them repeated aſſurances of pardon. But this infatuated people refuſed his proffered kindneſs with contempt,

tempt, and imputed his humanity to his fears. Five days after the commencement of the ſiege, Titus broke through the ſecond wall, and, though driven back by the beſieged, he recovered his ground, and made preparations for battering the third wall, which was their laſt defence. But firſt he ſent Joſephus, their countryman, into the city to exhort them to yield, who uſing all his eloquence to perſuade them, was only reviled with ſcoffs and reproaches. The ſiege was therefore carried on with greater vigour than before; and ſeveral batteries for engines were raiſed, which were no ſooner built, than deſtroyed by the enemy. At length, it was reſolved in council, to ſurround the whole city with a trench, and thus prevent all relief and ſuccours from abroad. This, which was quickly executed, ſeemed no way to intimidate the Jews. Though famine and peſtilence, its neceſſary attendants, began now to make the moſt horrid ravages within the walls, yet this deſperate people ſtill reſolved to hold out. Though obliged to live upon the moſt ſcanty and unwholeſome food, though a buſhel of corn was ſold for ſix hundred crowns, and the holes and ſewers were ranſacked for carcaſes, that had long ſince grown putrid, yet they were not to be moved. The famine raged at laſt to ſuch an exceſs, that a woman of diſtinction in the city, boiled her own child, and eat it. When this horrid ac-

count came to the ears of Titus, he declared that he would bury ſo abominable a crime in the ruins of their ſtate. In conſequence of this reſolution, he cut down all the woods within a conſiderable diſtance of the city, and cauſing more batteries to be raiſed, at length battered down the wall, and in five days entered the citadel by force. Thus reduced to the very verge of ruin, the remaining Jews ſtill deceived themſelves with abſurd and deluſive expectations, while many falſe prophets impoſed upon the multitude, declaring, they ſhould ſoon have aſſiſtance from God. The heat of the battle was now, therefore, gathered round the inner wall of the temple, while the defendants deſperately combated from the top. Titus was anxious to ſave this beautiful ſtructure, but a ſoldier caſting a brand into ſome adjacent buildings, the fire communicated to the temple; and, notwithſtanding the utmoſt endeavours on both ſides, the whole edifice was quickly conſumed. The ſight of the temple in ruins effectually ſerved to damp the ardour of the Jews. They began to perceive that Heaven had forſaken them, while their cries and lamentations echoed from the adjacent mountains. Even thoſe who were almoſt expiring, lifted up their dying eyes to bewail the loſs of their temple, which they valued more than life itſelf. The moſt reſolute, however, ſtill endeavoured to defend the upper and

ſtronger part of the city, named Sion: but Titus, with his battering engines, ſoon made himſelf entire maſter of the place. John and Simon were taken from the vaults, where they had concealed themſelves; the former was condemned to perpetual impriſonment, and the latter reſerved to grace the conqueror's triumph. The greateſt part of the populace were put to the ſword, and the city was entirely raſed by the plough; ſo that, according to our Saviour's prophecy not one ſtone remained upon another. Thus, after a ſiege of ſix months, this noble city was totally deſtroyed, having flouriſhed, under the peculiar direction of Heaven, above two thouſand years. The numbers who periſhed in this ſiege, according to Joſephus, amounted to above a million of ſouls, and the captives to almoſt an hundred thouſand. The temporal ſtate of the Jews ended with their city; while the wretched ſurvivors were baniſhed, ſold, and diſperſed into all parts of the world.

Upon the taking of Jeruſalem, the ſoldiers would have crowned Titus as conqueror, but he modeſtly refuſed the honour, alledging, that he was only an inſtrument in the hand of Heaven, that manifeſtly declared its wrath againſt the Jews. At Rome, however, all men's mouths were filled with the praiſes of the conqueror, who had not only ſhowed himſelf an excellent general, but a courageous combatant;

his return, therefore, in triumph, which he did with his father, was marked with all the magnificence and joy that was in the power of men to expreſs. All things that were eſteemed valuable or beautiful among men, were brought to adorn this great ſolemnity. Among the rich ſpoils were expoſed vaſt quantities of gold, taken out of the temple; but the Book of the Holy Law was not the leaſt remarkable among the magnificent profuſion. This was the firſt time that ever Rome ſaw the father and the ſon triumph together. A triumphal arch was erected upon this occaſion, on which were deſcribed all the victories of Titus over the Jews, which remains almoſt entire to this day. Veſpaſian likewiſe built a temple to Peace, wherein were depoſited moſt of the Jewiſh ſpoils; and having now calmed all commotions in every part of the empire, he ſhut up the temple of Janus, which had been open about five or ſix years.

Veſpaſian, having thus given ſecurity and peace to the empire, reſolved to correct numberleſs abuſes, which had grown up under the tyranny of his predeceſſors. To effect this with greater eaſe, he joined Titus with him in the conſulſhip and tribunitial power; and, in ſome meaſure admitted him a partner in all the higheſt offices of the ſtate. He began with reſtraining the licentiouſneſs of the army, and forcing them back to their priſtine diſcipline.

He ordered a young officer to be broke for being perfumed, declaring he had rather he had ſtunk of garlick. Some military meſſengers deſiring money to buy ſhoes, he ordered them, for the future, to perform their journies barefoot. He was not leſs ſtrict with regard to the ſenators and the knights. He turned out ſuch as were a diſgrace to their ſtation, and ſupplied their places with the moſt worthy men he could find. He abridged the proceſſes that had been carried to an unreaſonable length in the courts of juſtice. He took care to re-edify ſuch parts of the city as had ſuffered in the late commotions; particularly the Capitol, which had been lately burnt, and which he now reſtored to more than former magnificence. He likewiſe built a famous amphitheatre, the ruins of which are to this day an evidence of its ancient grandeur. The other ruinous cities in the empire alſo ſhared his paternal care; he improved ſuch as were declining, adorned others, and built many a-new. In ſuch acts as theſe, he paſſed a long reign of clemency and moderation; ſo that it is ſaid, no man ſuffered by an unjuſt or a ſevere decree, during his adminiſtration.

Julius Sabinus ſeems to be the only perſon who was treated with greater rigour than was uſual with this emperor. Sabinus, as was juſt mentioned before, was commander of a ſmall army in Gaul, and had declared himſelf emperor

upon the death of Vitellius. However, his army was ſoon after overcome by Veſpaſian's general, and himſelf compelled to ſeek ſafety by flight. He for ſome time wandered through the Roman provinces; without being diſcovered; but finding the purſuit every day become cloſer, he was obliged to hide himſelf in a cave, in which he remained concealed for no leſs than nine years, attended all the time by his faithful wife Epponina, who provided proviſions for his ſupport by day, and repaired to him in the night. She was, at length, diſcovered in the performance of this pious office; and Sabinus was taken priſoner, and carried to Rome. Several interceſſions were made to the emperor in his behalf; Epponina herſelf appearing with her two children, and imploring her huſband's pardon. However, neither her tears nor entreaties could prevail; Sabinus had been too dangerous a rival to obtain mercy; ſo that, though ſhe and her children were ſpared, her huſband ſuffered by the executioner.

But this ſeems to be the only inſtance in which Veſpaſian reſented paſt offences. He cauſed the daughter of Vitellius, his avowed enemy, to be married into a noble family; himſelf providing her a ſuitable fortune. One of Nero's ſervant's coming to entreat pardon for having once rudely thruſt him out of the palace, and inſulting him when in office, Veſpaſian only took

took his revenge by ſerving him juſt in the ſame manner. When any plots or conſpiracies were formed againſt him, he diſdained to puniſh the guilty; ſaying, That they deſerved rather his contempt for their ignorance, than his reſentment, as they ſeemed to envy him a dignity, of which he daily experienced the uneaſineſs. When he was ſeriouſly adviſed to beware of Metius Pompoſianus, againſt whom there was ſtrong cauſe of ſuſpicion, he raiſed him to the dignity of conſul; adding, That the time would come when he muſt be ſenſible of ſo great a benefit.

His liberality in the encouragement of arts and learning was not leſs than his clemency. He ſettled a conſtant ſalary of an hundred thouſand ſeſterces upon the teachers of rhetoric. He was particularly favourable to Joſephus, the Jewiſh hiſtorian. Quinctilian, the orator, and Pliny, the naturaliſt, flouriſhed in his reign, and were highly eſteemed by him.

He was no leſs an encourager of all other excellencies in art; and invited the greateſt maſters and artificers from all parts of the world, making them conſiderable preſents, as he found occaſion.

Yet all his numerous acts of generoſity and magnificence could not preſerve his character from the imputation of rapacity and avarice. He revived many obſolete methods of taxation;

and even bought and ſold commodities himſelf, in order to increaſe his fortune. He is charged with advancing the moſt avaricious governors to the provinces, in order to ſhare their plunder on their return to Rome. He deſcended to ſome very unuſual and diſhonourable impoſts, even to the laying a tax upon urine. When his ſon Titus remonſtrated againſt the meanneſs of ſuch a tax, Veſpaſian taking a piece of money, demanded if the ſmell offended him; adding, that this very money was produced by urine. But the avarice of princes is generally a virtue when their own expences are but few. The treaſury, when Veſpaſian came to the throne, was ſo much exhauſted, that he informed the ſenate that it would require a ſupply of three hundred millions (of our money) to re-eſtabliſh the commonwealth. This neceſſity muſt naturally produce more numerous and heavy taxations than the empire had hitherto experienced; but while the provinces were thus obliged to contribute to the ſupport of his power, he took every precaution to provide for their ſafety: ſo that we find but two inſurrections in his reign.

In the fourth year of his reign, Antiochus, king of Comagena, holding a private correſpondence with the Parthians the declared enemies of Rome, was taken priſoner in Cilicia, by Pœtus, the governor, and ſent bound to Rome. But Veſpaſian generouſly prevented all

all ill treatment towards him, by giving him a reſidence at Lacedæmon, and allowing him a revenue ſuitable to his dignity.

About the ſame time alſo, the Alani, a barbarous people, inhabiting along the river Tanais, abandoned their barren wilds, and invaded the kingdom of Media. From thence paſſing like a torrent into Armenia, after great ravages they overthrew Tiridates, the king of that country, with prodigious ſlaughter. Titus was at length ſent to chaſtiſe their inſolence, and relieve a king who was in alliance with Rome. However, the barbarians retired at the approach of the Roman army, laden with plunder; being in ſome meaſure compelled to wait a more favourable opportunity of renewing their irruptions. A.D. 73.

But theſe incurſions were as a tranſient ſtorm, the effects of which were ſoon repaired by the emperor's moderation and aſſiduity. We are told, that he new-formed and eſtabliſhed a thouſand nations, which had ſcarcely before amounted to two hundred. No provinces in the empire lay out of his view and protection. He had, during his whole reign, a particular regard to Britain; his generals, Petilius Cerelis and Julius Frontinus, brought the greateſt part of the iſland into ſubjection; and Agricola, who ſucceeded ſoon after, completed what they had begun.

Such

Such long and uninterrupted ſucceſs no way increaſed this emperor's vanity. He ever ſeemed averſe to thoſe ſwelling titles which the ſenate and people were conſtantly offering him. When the king of Parthia, in one of his letters ſtyled himſelf king of kings, Veſpaſian, in his anſwer, only called himſelf ſimply Flavius Veſpaſian. He was ſo far from attempting to hide the meanneſs of his original, that he frequently mentioned it in company, and when ſome flatterers were for deriving his pedigree from Hercules, he deſpiſed and derided the meanneſs of their adulation. In this manner, having reigned ten years, loved by his ſubjects, and deſerving their affection, he was ſurpriſed with an indiſpoſition at Campania, which from the beginning he declared would be fatal; crying out, in the ſpirit of paganiſm, "Methinks "I am going to be a God." Removing from thence to the city, and afterwards to a country-ſeat near Reate, he was there taken with a flux, which brought him to the laſt extremity. However, perceiving his end approaching, and that he was juſt going to expire, he cried out, that an emperor ought to die ſtanding; wherefore, raiſing himſelf upon his feet, he expired in the hands of thoſe that ſuſtained him.

"He was a man (ſays Pliny) in whom "power made no alteration, except in giving "him the opportunity of doing good equal to "his

" his will." He was the ſecond Roman emperor that died a natural death; and he was peaceably ſucceeded by Titus his ſon.

CHAP. XII.

TITUS, the Eleventh EMPEROR of ROME.

TITUS being joyfully received as emperor, notwithſtanding a ſlight oppoſition from his brother Domitian, who maintained that he was appointed ſucceſſor, and that Titus had falſified the will, he began to reign with the practice of every virtue that became an emperor and a man. During the life of his father there had been many imputations againſt him, both for cruelty, luſt, and prodigality; but upon his exaltation to the throne, he ſeemed entirely to take leave of his former vices, and became an example of the greateſt moderation and humanity. His firſt ſtep towards gaining the affections of his ſubjects, was his moderating his paſſions, and bridling his ſtrong inclinations. He had long loved Berenice, ſiſter to Agrippa, king of Judæa, a woman of the greateſt beauty and refined allurements. But knowing that the connexion with her was entirely diſagreeable to the people of Rome, he gained a victory over his affections, and ſent her away, notwithſtanding A.D. 79.

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ing their mutual paſſion, and the many arts ſhe uſed to induce him to change his reſolutions. He next diſmiſſed all thoſe who had been the former miniſters of his pleaſures, and forbore to countenance the companions of his looſer recreations, though he had formerly taken great pains in the ſelection. This moderation, added to his juſtice and generoſity, procured him the love of all good men, and the appellation of the Delight of Mankind; which all his actions ſeemed calculated to enſure.

As he came to the throne with all the advantage of his father's popularity, he was reſolved to uſe every method to increaſe it. He therefore took particular care to puniſh all informers, falſe witneſſes, and promoters of diſſention. Thoſe wretches, who had their riſe in the licentiouſneſs and impunity of former reigns, were now become ſo numerous, that their crimes called loudly for puniſhment. Of theſe therefore he daily made publick examples; condemning them to be ſcourged in the moſt public ſtreets; next to be dragged through the theatre; then to be baniſhed into the uninhabited parts of the empire, or ſold as ſlaves. He exhibited alſo many ſhows, which were very ſumptuous and magnificent. He, in one day, cauſed five thouſand wild beaſts to be baited in the amphitheatre, for the entertainment of the people. Theſe public rejoicings were continued

tinued for an hundred days together; during which, he permitted the people to dictate the manner in which they ſhould chooſe to be entertained. His courteſy and readineſs to do good have been celebrated even by Chriſtian writers; his principal rule being never to ſend any petitioner diſſatisfied away. One night recollecting that he had done nothing beneficial to mankind the day preceding, he cried out among his friends, "I have loſt a day." A ſentence too remarkable not to be univerſally known.

He was ſo tender of the lives of his ſubjects, that he took upon him the office of Pontifex Maximus, or high prieſt, to keep his hands undefiled with blood. He ſo little regarded ſuch as cenſured or abuſed him, that he was heard to ſay, "When I do nothing worthy of cen-"ſure, why ſhould I be diſpleaſed at it?" He was even heard to affirm, that he had rather die himſelf than put another to death. Learning that two noblemen had conſpired againſt him, he readily forgave them, and the next day placing them next himſelf in the theatre, he put the ſwords with which the gladiators fought into their hands, demanding their judgement and approbation, whether they were of ſufficient ſhortneſs. He pardoned his brother Domitian in the ſame manner, who had actually prepared all things for an open rebellion.

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In this reign an eruption of Mount Veſuvius did conſiderable damage, overwhelming many towns, and ſending its aſhes into countries more than an hundred miles diſtant. Upon this memorable occaſion, Pliny, the naturaliſt, loſt his life; for being impelled by too eager a curioſity to obſerve the eruption, he was ſuffocated in the flames. There happened alſo about this time a fire at Rome, which continued three days and nights ſucceſſively, being followed by a plague, in which ten thouſand men were buried in a day. The emperor, however, did all that lay in his power to repair the damages ſuſtained by the public; and, with reſpect to the city, declared that he would take the whole loſs of that upon himſelf.

Theſe diſaſters were in ſome meaſure counter-balanced by the ſucceſſes in Britain, under Agricola. This excellent general having been ſent into that country towards the latter end of Veſpaſian's reign, ſhowed himſelf equally expert in quelling the refractory, and civilizing thoſe who had formerly ſubmitted to the Roman power. The Ordovices, or inhabitants of North Wales, were the firſt that were ſubdued. He then made a deſcent upon Mona, or the iſland of Angleſey, which ſurrendered at diſcretion. Having thus rendered himſelf maſter of the whole country, he took every method to reſtore diſcipline to his own army, and to introduce

introduce ſome ſhare of politeneſs among thoſe whom he had conquered. He exhorted them, both by advice and example, to build temples, theatres, and ſtately houſes. He cauſed the ſons of their nobility to be inſtructed in the liberal arts; he had them taught the Latin language, and induced them to imitate the Roman modes of dreſs and living. Thus, by degrees, this barbarous people began to aſſume the luxurious manners of their conquerors, and afterwards even to out-do them in all the refinements of ſenſual pleaſure. For theſe ſucceſſes in Britain, Titus was ſaluted emperor the fifteenth time; but he did not long ſurvive this honour, being ſeiſed by a violent fever at a little diſtance from Rome. Perceiving his death approach, he declared, that, during the whole courſe of his life, he knew but one action of which he repented; and that action he did not think proper to expreſs. He expired ſhortly after, but not without ſuſpicion of treachery from his brother Domitian, who had long wiſhed to govern. His death was in the forty-firſt year of his age, having reigned two years, two months, and twenty days.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

DOMITIAN, the Twelfth EMPEROR of ROME.

A. D. 81. THE love which all ranks of people bore to Titus, facilitated the election of his brother Domitian, notwithſtanding the ill opinion many had already conceived of him. His ambition was already but too well known, and his pride ſoon appeared upon his coming to the throne; having been heard to declare, that he had given the empire to his father and brother, and now received it again as his due.

The beginning of his reign was univerſally acceptable to the people, as he appeared equally remarkable for his clemency, liberality, and juſtice. He carried his abhorrence of cruelty ſo far, as, at one time, to forbid the ſacrificing of oxen. His liberality was ſuch, that he would not accept of the legacies that were left him by ſuch as had children of their own. His juſtice was ſuch, that he would ſit whole days, and reverſe the partial ſentences of the ordinary judges. He appeared very careful and liberal in repairing the libraries that had been burnt, and recovering copies of ſuch books

books as had been loſt, ſending purpoſely to Alexandria to tranſcribe and correct them.

But he ſoon began to ſhow the natural deformity of his mind. Inſtead of cultivating literature, as his father and brother had done, he neglected all kinds of ſtudy, addicting himſelf wholly to meaner purſuits, particularly archery and gaming. He was ſo very expert an archer, that he would frequently cauſe one of his ſlaves to ſtand at a great diſtance, with his hand ſpread as a mark, and would ſhoot his arrows with ſuch exactneſs, as to ſtick them all between his fingers. He inſtituted three ſorts of conteſts to be obſerved every five years; in muſick, horſemanſhip, and wreſtling; but at the ſame time he baniſhed all philoſophers, and mathematicians from Rome. No emperor before him entertained the people with ſuch various and expenſive ſhows. During theſe diverſions he diſtributed great rewards, ſitting as preſident himſelf, adorned with a purple robe and crown, with the prieſts of Jupiter, and the college of Flavian prieſts about him. The meanneſs of his occupations in ſolitude was a juſt contraſt to his exhibitions of public oſtentation. He uſually ſpent his hours of retirement in catching flies, and ſticking them through with a bodkin; ſo that one of his ſervants being aſked, if the emperor were alone, anſwered,

that he had not ſo much as a fly to bear him company.

His vices ſeemed every day to increaſe with the duration of his reign; and as he thus became more odious to his people, all their murmurs only ſerved to add ſtrength to his ſuſpicions, and malice to his cruelty. His ungrateful treatment of Agricola ſeemed the firſt ſymptom of his natural malevolence. Domitian was always particularly fond of obtaining a military reputation, and therefore jealous of it in others. He had marched ſome time before into Gaul, upon a pretended exhibition againſt the Catti, a people of Germany; and, without ever ſeeing the enemy, reſolved to have the honour of a triumph upon his return to Rome. For that purpoſe he purchaſed a number of ſlaves, whom he dreſſed in German habits, and at the head of this miſerable proceſſion, entered the city, amidſt the apparent acclamations, and concealed contempt of all his ſubjects. The ſucceſſes, therefore, of Agricola in Britain, affected him with an extreme degree of envy. This admirable general, who is ſcarce mentioned by any other writer except Tacitus, purſued the advantages which he had already obtained. He ſubdued the Caledonians; and overcame Calgacus, the Britiſh chief, at the head of thirty thouſand men; and afterwards ſending out a fleet to ſcour the coaſt, firſt diſcovered

covered Great-Britain to be an iſland. He likewiſe diſcovered and ſubdued the Orkneys; and thus reduced the whole into a civilized province of the Roman empire. When the account of theſe ſucceſſes was brought to Domitian, he received it with ſeeming pleaſure, but real uneaſineſs. He thought Agricola's riſing reputation a tacit reproach upon his own inactivity; and, inſtead of attempting to emulate, he reſolved to ſuppreſs the merit of his ſervices. He ordered him, therefore, external marks of approbation; and took care that triumphant ornaments, ſtatues, and other honours, ſhould be decreed him: but at the ſame time he removed him from his command, under a pretence of appointing him to the government of Syria. By theſe means, Agricola ſurrendered up his province to Saluſtius Lucullus, but ſoon found that Syria was otherwiſe diſpoſed of. Upon his return to Rome, which was privately and by night, he was coolly received by the emperor; and dying ſome time after in retirement, it was ſuppoſed by ſome, that his end was haſtened by Domitian's direction.

Domitian ſoon after found the want of ſo experienced a commander, in the many irruptions of the barbarous nations that ſurrounded the empire. The Sarmatians in Europe, joined with thoſe of Aſia, made a formidable invaſion, at once deſtroying a whole legion, and a ge-

neral of the Romans. The Dacians, under the conduct of Decebalus their king, made an irruption, and overthrew the Romans in ſeveral engagements. The conteſts now were not for the limits of the empire, and the banks of the Danube, but the provinces themſelves were in danger. Loſſes were followed by loſſes; ſo that every ſeaſon became memorable for ſome remarkable overthrow. At laſt, however, the ſtate making a rigorous exertion of its internal power, the barbarians were repelled, partly by force, and partly by the aſſiſtance of money; which only ſerved to enable them to make future invaſions with greater advantage. But in whatever manner the enemy might have been repelled, Domitian was reſolved not to loſe the honours of a triumph. He returned in great ſplendour to Rome; and, not contented with thus triumphing twice without a victory, he reſolved to take the ſurname of Germanicus, for his conqueſt over a people with whom he never contended.

In proportion as the ridicule increaſed againſt him, his pride ſeemed every day to demand greater homage. He would permit his ſtatues to be made only of gold and ſilver; he aſſumed to himſelf divine honours: and ordered that all men ſhould treat him with the ſame appellations which they gave to the divinity. His cruelty was not inferior to his ignorance; he cauſed num-

numbers of the moſt illuſtrious ſenators, and others, to be put to death, upon the moſt trifling pretences. One Ælius Lama was condemned and executed only for jeſting, though there was neither novelty nor poignancy in his humour. Cocceanus was murdered only for celebrating the nativity of Otho. Pompoſianus ſhared the ſame fate, becauſe it was foretold by an aſtrologer that he ſhould be emperor. Saluſtius Lucullus, his lieutenant in Britain, was deſtroyed only for having given his name to a new ſort of launces of his own invention. Junius Ruſticus died for publiſhing a book, in which he commended Thraſes and Priſcus, two philoſophers, who oppoſed Veſpaſian's coming to the throne.

Such cruelties as theſe, that ſeem almoſt without a motive, muſt have conſequently produced rebellion. Lucius Antonius, governor of Upper Germany, knowing how much the emperor was deteſted at home, reſolved upon contending for the throne; and, accordingly, aſſumed the enſigns of imperial dignity. As he was at the head of a formidable army, his ſucceſs remained a long time doubtful; but a ſudden overflowing of the Rhine, dividing his army, he was ſet upon at that juncture by Normandus, the emperor's general, and totally routed. The news of this victory, we are told, was brought to Rome, by ſupernatural means,

on the ſame day that the battle was fought. Domitian's ſeverity was greatly increaſed by this ſhort-lived ſucceſs. In order to diſcover thoſe who were accomplices with the adverſe party, he invented new tortures; ſometimes cutting off the hands, at other times thruſting fire into the privities of thoſe whom he ſuſpected of being his enemies. During theſe ſeverities, he aggravated his guilt by hypocriſy, never pronouncing ſentence without a preamble full of gentleneſs and mercy. The night before he crucified the comptroller of his houſehold, he treated him with every appearance of friendſhip, and ordered him a diſh of meat from his own table. He carried Aretinus Clemens with him in his own litter the day he had reſolved upon his death. He was particularly terrible to the ſenate and nobility; the whole body of whom he frequently threatened to extirpate. At one time he ſurrounded the ſenate-houſe with his troops, to the great conſternation of the ſenators. At another, he reſolved to amuſe himſelf with their terrors in a different manner. Having invited them to a public entertainment, he received them all very formally at the entrance of his palace, and conducted them into a ſpacious hall, hung round with black, and illuminated by a few melancholy lamps, that diffuſed light only ſufficient to ſhow the horrors of the place. All around were to be ſeen nothing

nothing but coffins, with the names of each of the ſenators written upon them, together with other objects of terror, and inſtruments of execution. While the company beheld all theſe preparations with ſilent agony, ſeveral men, having their bodies blackened, each with a drawn ſword in one hand, and a flaming torch in the other, entered the hall, and danced round them. After ſome time, when the gueſts expected nothing leſs than inſtant death, well knowing Domitian's capricious cruelty, the doors were ſet open, and one of the ſervants came to inform them, that the emperor gave all the company leave to withdraw.

Theſe cruelties were rendered ſtill more odious by his luſt and avarice. Frequently, after preſiding at an execution, he would retire with the lewdeſt proſtitutes, and uſed the ſame baths which they did. His avarice, which was the conſequence of his profuſion, had no bounds. He ſeiſed upon the eſtates of all, againſt whom he could find the ſmalleſt pretence; the moſt trifling action, or word, againſt the majeſty of the prince, was ſufficient to ruin the poſſeſſor. He particularly exacted large ſums from the rich Jews, who even then began to practiſe the arts of money getting, for which they are at preſent ſo remarkable. He was excited againſt them, not only by avarice, but by jealouſy. A prophecy had been long current in the Eaſt, that a perſon from the line of David ſhould rule

the world. Whereupon, this ſuſpicious tyrant, willing to evade the prediction, commanded all the Jews of the lineage of David, to be diligently ſought out, and put to death. Two Chriſtians, grandſons of St. Jude, the apoſtle, of that line, were brought before him; but finding them poor, and no way ambitious of temporal power, he diſmiſſed them, conſidering them as objects too mean for his jealouſy. However, his perſecution of the Chriſtians was more ſevere than that of any of his predeceſſors. By his letters and edicts they were baniſhed in ſeveral parts of the empire, and put to death with all the tortures of ingenious cruelty. The predictions of the Chaldeans and aſtrologers alſo, concerning his death, gave him violent apprehenſions, and kept him in the moſt tormenting diſquietude. As he approached the end of his reign, he would permit no criminal, or priſoner, to be brought into his preſence, till they were bound in ſuch a manner as to be incapable of injuring him; and he generally ſecured their chains in his own hands. His jealouſies increaſed to ſuch a degree, that he ordered the gallery in which he walked, to be ſet round with a pellucid ſtone, which ſerved as a mirror to reflect the perſons of all ſuch as approached him from behind. Every omen and prodigy gave him freſh anxiety. Aſcleterion, the aſtrologer, was brought before him, for publiſhing predictions concerning his death.

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As he did not attempt to deny the charge, the emperor demanded, if he knew his own fortune? To which the aſtrologer replied, that he ſhould be devoured by dogs. Upon which, Domitian immediately ordered him to be ſlain, and, to fruſtrate his prediction, to be burnt immediately after. But we are told, that, during this execution, a furious tempeſt aroſe, which blew down the body, and diſperſed the executioners; and, in the mean time the body was devoured by dogs, as the poor aſtrologer had foretold. An accident like this was a ſufficient pretext for the death of hundreds. The laſt part of the tyrant's reign was more inſupportable than any of the preceding. Nero exerciſed his cruelties without being a ſpectator; but a principal part of the Roman miſeries, during this reign, was to ſee and be ſeen; to behold the ſtern air and fiery viſage of the tyrant, which he had armed againſt bluſhing by continued intemperance, directing the tortures, and maliciouſly pleaſed with adding poignance to every agony.

But a period was ſoon to be put to this monſter's cruelties. Rome had now, by horrid experience, learned the art of ridding herſelf of her tyrants. Among the number of thoſe whom he at once careſſed and ſuſpected was his wife Domitia, whom he had taken from Ælius Lama, her former huſband. This woman, however, was become

become obnoxious to him, for having placed her affections upon one Paris, a player; and he reſolved to diſpatch her with ſeveral others whom he either hated or ſuſpected. It was the tyrant's method to put down the names of all ſuch as he intended to deſtroy in his tablets, which he kept about him with great circumſpection. Domitia, fortunately, happening to get a ſight of them, was ſtruck at finding her own name in the catalogue of thoſe fated to deſtruction. She ſhowed the fatal liſt to Norbanus and Petronius, præfects of the prætorian bands, who found themſelves ſet down; as likewiſe to Stephanus, the comptroller of the houſhold, who came into the conſpiracy with alacrity. Parthenius alſo, the chief chamberlain, was of the number; and theſe, after many conſultations, determined to take the firſt opportunity of putting their deſign into execution: they, at length, fixed upon the eighteenth day of September, for the completion of their great attempt. Domitian, whoſe death was every day foretold by the aſtrologers, who, of conſequence, muſt at laſt be right in their predictions, was, in ſome meaſure, apprehenſive of that particular day; and, as he had been ever timorous, ſo was he now more particularly upon his guard. He had for ſome time before ſecluded himſelf in the moſt ſecret receſſes of his palace, and at midnight was ſo affrighted as to leap out of his bed, enquiring of

of his attendants what hour of the night it was. Upon their falſely aſſuring him that it was an hour later than that which he was taught to apprehend, quite tranſported, as if all danger were paſt, he prepared to go to the bath. Juſt then, Petronius, his chamberlain, came to inform him that Stephanus, the comptroller of the houſehold, deſired to ſpeak to him upon an affair of the utmoſt importance. The emperor having given orders that his attendants ſhould retire, Stephanus entered with his hand in a ſcarf, which he had worn thus for ſome days, the better to conceal a dagger, as none were permitted to approach the emperor with arms. He began by giving information of a pretended conſpiracy, and exhibited a paper, in which the particulars were ſpecified. While Domitian was reading the contents, with an eager curioſity, Stephanus drew his dagger, and ſtruck him in the groin. The wound not being mortal, Domitian caught hold of the aſſaſſin, and threw him upon the ground, calling out for aſſiſtance. He demanded alſo his ſword, that was uſually placed under his pillow, and a boy who attended in the apartment, running to fetch it, found only the ſcabbard, for Parthenius had previouſly removed the blade. The ſtruggle with Stephanus ſtill continued; Domitian ſtill keeping him under, at one time attempting to wreſt the dagger from his hand, at another to tear out his

his eyes with his fingers. But Parthenius, with his freedman, a gladiator, and two ſubaltern officers, now coming in, they all ran furiouſly upon the emperor, and diſpatched him with ſeven wounds. In the mean time ſome of the officers of the guard being alarmed, came to his aſſiſtance, but too late to ſave him; however they ſlew Stephanus on the ſpot.

It is almoſt incredible what ſome writers relate concerning Apollonius Tyaneus, who was then at Epheſus. This perſon, whom ſome call a magician, and ſome a philoſoper, but who more probably was nothing more than an impoſtor, was, juſt at that minute in which Domitian was ſlain, lecturing in one of the public gardens of the city. But ſtopping ſhort, all of a ſudden he cried out, "Courage, Stephanus, "ſtrike the tyrant." And then, after a pauſe—"Rejoice, my friends, the tyrant dies this day; "this day do I ſay! the very moment in which "I kept ſilence he ſuffers for his crimes—he "dies!"

Many more prodigies were ſaid to have portended his death; but the fate of ſuch a monſter ſeemed to produce more preternatural appearances, and more predictions, than it deſerved. The truth ſeems to be, that a belief in omens and prodigies was again become prevalent; the people were relapſing into their priſtine barbarity; a country of ignorance is ever the proper ſoil for an harveſt of impoſture.

CHAP. XIV.

NERVA, the Thirteenth EMPEROR of ROME.

WHEN it was publickly known that Domitian was ſlain, the joy of the ſenate was ſo great, that being aſſembled with the utmoſt haſte, they began to load his memory with every reproach. His ſtatues were commanded to be taken down; and a decree was made, that all his inſcriptions ſhould be eraſed, his name ſtruck out of the regiſters of fame, and his funeral omitted. The people, who now took little part in the affairs of government, looked on his death with indifference; the ſoldiers alone, whom he had loaded with favours, and enriched by largeſſes, ſincerely regretted their benefactor.

The ſenate, therefore, reſolved to provide a ſucceſſor before the army could have an opportunity of taking the appointment upon themſelves; and Cocceius Nerva was choſen to the empire the very day on which the tyrant was ſlain.

Nerva was of an illuſtrious family, as moſt ſay, by birth a Spaniard, and above ſixty-five

years old when he was called to the throne. He was, at that time, the moſt remarkable man in Rome, for his virtues, moderation, and reſpect to the laws; and he owed his exaltation to the blameleſs conduct of his former life. When the ſenate went to pay him their ſubmiſſions, he received them with his accuſtomed humility, while Arius Antonius, his moſt intimate friend, having embraced him with great familiarity, addreſſed him in a language very different from that which the former emperors were accuſtomed to hear. "I come (cried "he) with others, to congratulate, not your "good fortune, but that of the Roman em-"pire. You have long eſcaped the malice of "your enemies, and the cruelty of tyrants. "Now, at the decline of life, to be plunged "into new troubles, and ſurrounding dangers, "to be expoſed, not only to the hatred of ene-"mies, but to the dangerous requeſts of friend-"ſhip, is not a ſtate to be wiſhed for: your "enemies will naturally envy; and your friends "preſuming upon your former favour, if their "ſuits be denied, will become enemies; ſo "that you muſt either injure the public, or "loſe their favour." Such candid advice was received with proper gratitude; and, indeed, no emperor ſeemed to want ſuch advice more than he; as the eaſy indulgence of his diſpoſition made him the prey of his inſidious courtiers.

How-

However, an exceſs of indulgence and humanity were faults that Rome could eaſily pardon, after the cruelties of ſuch an emperor as Domitian. Being long accuſtomed to tyranny, they regarded Nerva's gentle reign with rapture, and even gave his imbecility the name of benevolence. Upon coming to the throne, he ſolemnly ſwore that no ſenator of Rome ſhould be put to death by his command, during his reign, though they gave ever ſo juſt a cauſe. This oath he ſo religiouſly obſerved, that when two ſenators had conſpired his death, he uſed no kind of ſeverity againſt them; but ſending for them to let them ſee he was not ignorant of their deſigns, he carried them with him to the public theatre: there preſenting each a dagger he deſired them to ſtrike as he was determined not to ward off the blow. Such acts of clemency appeared to the multitude as virtues; but others ſaw them in a different light, and conſidered them as encouragements to diſſoluteneſs. One of the principal men in Rome was heard to declare, that it was indeed a misfortune to live under a prince who conſidered innocence as a crime; but a greater ſtill, to live under one who regarded crimes as innocent. Having one night invited Veiento, one of Domitian's moſt vicious favourites, to ſupper, the converſation turned upon the vices of Catullus Meſſalinus, whoſe memory was deteſted for his cruelties,

during

during the former reign. As each of the gueſts mentioned him with horror, Nerva was induced to aſk one Mauricus, who ſat at table, "What do you think, Mauricus, would be-"come of ſuch a man now?"—"I think (re-"plied Mauricus, pointing to Veiento) that he "would have been invited, as ſome of us are, "to ſupper.

However true ſuch ſarcaſms might have been, Nerva bore them with the utmoſt good humour. Ever deſirous of being rather loved than feared by his ſubjects, he conferred great favours, and beſtowed large gifts, upon his particular friends. His liberality was ſo extenſive, that, upon his firſt promotion to the empire, he was conſtrained to ſell his gold and ſilver plate, with his other rich moveables, to enable him to continue his liberalities. He releaſed the cities of the empire from many ſevere duties, which had been impoſed by Veſpaſian; he took off a rigorous tribute, which had been laid upon carriages, and reſtored thoſe to their property who had been unjuſtly diſpoſſeſſed by Domitian.

During his ſhort reign he made ſeveral good laws. He particularly prohibited the caſtration of male children; which had been likewiſe condemned by his predeceſſor, but not wholly removed. He put all thoſe ſlaves to death, who had, during the laſt reign, informed againſt their

their maſters. He permitted no ſtatues to be erected to his honour, and converted ſuch of Domitian's as had been ſpared by the ſenate into money. He ſold many rich robes, and much of the ſplendid furniture of the palace, and retrenched ſeveral unreaſonable expenſes at court. At the ſame time, he had ſo little regard for money, that when one of his ſubjects found a large treaſure, and wrote to the emperor how to diſpoſe of it, he received for anſwer that he might *uſe it*: but the finder ſtill informing the emperor that it was a fortune too large for a private perſon, Nerva, admiring his honeſty, wrote him word, that then he might *abuſe it*.

A life of ſuch generoſity and mildneſs was not, however, without its enemies. Vigilius Rufus, who had oppoſed him, was not only pardoned, but made his colleague in the conſulſhip. Calpurnius Craſſus alſo, with ſome others, formed a dangerous conſpiracy to deſtroy him; but Nerva would uſe no ſeverity: he was ſatisfied with baniſhing thoſe who were culpable, though the ſenate were for inflicting more rigorous puniſhments. But the moſt dangerous inſurrection againſt his intereſts was from the prætorian bands, who, headed by Caſparius Olianus, inſiſted upon revenging the late emperor's death, whoſe memory was ſtill dear to them, from his frequent liberalities.

Nerva, whoſe kindneſs to good men rendered him more obnoxious to the vicious, did all in his power to ſtop the progreſs of this inſurrection; he preſented himſelf to the mutinous ſoldiers, and, opening his boſom, deſired them to ſtrike there, rather than be guilty of ſo much injuſtice. The ſoldiers, however, paid no regard to his remonſtrances, but ſeizing upon Petronius and Parthenius, ſlew them in the moſt ignominious manner. Not content with this outrage, they even compelled the emperor to approve of their ſedition, and to make a ſpeech to the people, in which he thanked the cohorts for their fidelity.

So diſagreeable a conſtraint upon the emperor's inclinations was, in the end, attended with the moſt happy effects, as it cauſed the adoption of Trajan to ſucceed him. Nerva perceived that in the preſent turbulent diſpoſition of the times, he ſtood in need of an aſſiſtant in the empire, who might ſhare the fatigues of government, and contribute to keep the licentious in awe. For this purpoſe, ſetting aſide all his own relations, he fixed upon Ulpius Trajan, an utter ſtranger to his family, who was then governor in Upper Germany, as his ſucceſſor. Having put his determination in execution, and performed the accuſtomed ſolemnities, he inſtantly ſent off ambaſſadors to Cologne, where Trajan then reſided, entreating his aſſiſtance

ance in puniſhing thoſe from whom he had received ſuch an inſult.

The adoption of this admirable man proved ſo great a curb to the licentiouſneſs of the ſoldiery, that they continued in perfect obedience during the reſt of his reign; and Caſperius being ſent to him, was, by his command, either baniſhed or put to death.

The adopting Trajan was the laſt public act of Nerva. In about three months after, having put himſelf in a violent paſſion with one Regulus, a ſenator, he was ſeiſed with a fever, of which he died, after a ſhort reign of one year, four months, and nine days.

He was the firſt foreign emperor who reigned in Rome, and juſtly reputed a prince of great generoſity and moderation. He is alſo celebrated for his wiſdom, though with leſs reaſon, the greateſt inſtance he gave of it during his reign, being the choice of his ſucceſſor.

CHAP. XV.

TRAJAN, the Fourteenth EMPEROR of ROME.

TRAJAN's family was originally from Italy, though he was born at Seville in Spain. He very early accompanied his father, who was a general of the Romans, in his expe- U.C. 851. A. D. 98.

ditions along the Euphrates and the Rhine, and, while yet very young, acquired a conſiderable reputation for military accompliſhments. He enured his body to fatigue; he made long marches on foot; and laboured to acquire all that ſkill in war which was neceſſary for a commander. When he was made general of the army in Lower Germany, which was one of the moſt conſiderable employments in the empire, it cauſed no alteration in his manners or way of living, and the commander was ſeen no way differing from the private tribune, except in his ſuperior wiſdom and virtues. The great qualities of his mind were accompanied with all the advantages of perſon. His body was majeſtick and vigorous; he was at that middle time of life which is happily tempered with the warmth of youth, and the caution of age, being forty-two years old. To theſe qualities were added, a modeſty that ſeemed peculiar to himſelf; ſo that mankind found a pleaſure in praiſing thoſe accompliſhments of which the poſſeſſor ſeemed no way conſcious. Upon the whole, Trajan is diſtinguiſhed as the greateſt and the beſt emperor of Rome. Others might have equalled him in war, and ſome might have been his rivals in clemency and goodneſs; but he ſeems the only prince who united theſe talents in the greateſt perfection, and

and who appears equally to engage our admiration, and our regard.

Upon being informed of the death of Nerva, he prepared to return to Rome, whither he was invited by the united entreaties of the ſtate. He therefore began to march with a diſcipline that was for a long time unknown in the armies of the empire. The countries through which he paſſed, were neither ravaged nor taxed, and he entered the city, not in a triumphant manner, though he had deſerved many, but on foot, attended with the civil officers of the ſtate, and followed by his ſoldiers, who marched ſilently forward, with modeſty and reſpect.

One of the firſt lectures he received, reſpecting his conduct in governing the empire, was from Plutarch, the Philoſopher, who had the honour of being his maſter. Upon his arrival at Rome, he is ſaid to have written him a letter, to the following purpoſe: "Since your "merits, and not your importunities, have ad- "vanced you to the empire, permit me to con- "gratulate your virtues, and my own good "fortune. If your future government prove "anſwerable to your former worth, I ſhall be "happy. But if you become worſe for power, "yours will be the danger, and mine the ig- "nominy of your conduct. The errors of the "pupil will be charged upon his inſtructor, "Seneca is reproached for the enormities of

" Nero; and Socrates and Quintilian have not " eſcaped cenſure for the miſconduct of their " reſpective ſcholars. But you have it in your " power to make me the moſt honoured of " men, by continuing what you are. Continue " the command of your paſſions; and make " virtue the ſcope of all your actions. If you " follow theſe inſtructions, then will I glory in " my having preſumed to give them; if you " neglect what I offer, then will this letter be " my teſtimony that you have not erred through " the counſel and authority of Plutarch." I have inſerted this letter, whether genuine or not, becauſe it ſeems to me well written; and a ſtriking picture of this philoſopher's manner of addreſſing that beſt of princes.

It would be tedious and unneceſſary to enter into a detail of this good monarch's labour for the ſtate. His application to buſineſs, his moderation to his enemies, his modeſty in exaltation, his liberality to the deſerving, and his frugality in his own expenſes, theſe have all been the ſubject of panegyrick among his contemporaries; and they continue to be the admiration of poſterity.

Upon giving the præfect of the prætorian bands the ſword, according to cuſtom, he made uſe of this remarkable expreſſion: " Take this " ſword, and uſe it; if I have merit, for me; " if otherwiſe, againſt me." After which, he added,

added, That he who gave laws was the firſt who was bound to preſerve them.

If he had any failings, they were his love of women: which, however, never hurried him beyond the bounds of decency; and his immoderate paſſion for war, to which he had been bred up from his childhood. The firſt war he was engaged in after his coming to the throne was with the Dacians, who, during the reign of Domitian, had committed numberleſs ravages upon the provinces of the empire. He therefore raiſed a powerful army, and with great expedition marched into thoſe barbarous countries, where he was vigorouſly oppoſed by Decebalus, the Dacian king, who, for a long time, withſtood his boldeſt efforts. At length, however, this monarch being conſtrained to come to a general battle, and no longer able to protract the war, he was routed with great ſlaughter; though not without great loſs to the conqueror. The Roman ſoldiers, upon this occaſion, wanting linen to bind up their wounds the emperor tore his own robe to ſupply them. This victory compelled the enemy to ſue for peace, which they obtained upon very diſadvantageous terms; their king coming into the Roman camp, and acknowleding himſelf a vaſſal of the Roman empire.

Upon Trajan's return, after the uſual triumphs and rejoicings upon ſuch an occaſion

were over he was ſurpriſed with an account, that the Dacians had renewed hoſtilities. Decebalus their king was, therefore, a ſecond time, adjudged an enemy of the Roman ſtate, and Trajan invaded his dominions with an army equal to that with which he had before ſubdued him. But Decebalus, now grown more cautious by his former defeat, uſed every art to avoid coming to an engagement. He alſo put various ſtratagems in practice to diſtreſs the enemy; and, at one time, Trajan was in danger of being ſlain or taken. Decebalus took Longinus, one of the Roman generals, priſoner, and threatened to kill him, in caſe Trajan refuſed granting him terms of peace. But the emperor replied, That peace and war had not their dependence upon the ſafety of one ſubject only; wherefore Longinus, ſome time after, deſtroyed himſelf by a voluntary death. The fate of this general ſeemed to give new vigour to Trajan's operations. In order to be better enabled to invade the enemy's territories at pleaſure, he undertook a moſt ſtupendous work, which was no leſs than building a bridge acroſs the Danube. This amazing ſtructure, which was built over a deep, broad, and rapid river, conſiſted of more than twenty-two arches, an hundred and fifty feet high, and an hundred and ſeventy broad: the ruins of this ſtructure, which remain to this day, ſhow

ſhow modern architects how far they were ſurpaſſed by the ancients, both in the greatneſs and the boldneſs of their deſigns. Upon finiſhing this work, Trajan continued the war with great vigour, ſharing with the meaneſt of his ſoldiers the fatigues of the campaign, and continually encouraging them to their duty by his own example. By theſe means, notwithſtanding the country was ſpacious and uncultivated, and the inhabitants brave and hardy, he ſubdued the whole, and added the kingdom of Dacia as a province to the Roman empire. Decebalus made ſome attempts to eſcape, but being ſurrounded on every ſide, he at laſt ſlew himſelf, and his head was ſent immediately to Rome, to certify his misfortune there. Theſe ſucceſſes ſeemed to advance the empire to a greater degree of ſplendour than it had hitherto acquired. Ambaſſadors were ſeen to come from the interior parts of India to congratulate Trajan's ſucceſs, and ſollicit his friendſhip. At his return to Rome, he entered the city in triumph, and the rejoicings for his victories laſted for the ſpace of an hundred and twenty days.

Having thus given peace and proſperity to the empire, Trajan continued his reign, loved, honoured, and almoſt adored by his ſubjects. He adorned the city with public buildings; he freed it from ſuch men as lived by their vices; he

he entertained perſons of merit with the utmoſt familiarity; and ſo little feared his enemies, that he could ſcarcely be induced to ſuppoſe he had any. Being one day told by ſome, that his friend and favourite, Sura, was falſe to him; Trajan, to ſhow how much he relied upon his fidelity, went, in his ordinary manner, to ſup with him. There he commanded Sura's ſurgeon to be brought, whom he ordered to take off the hair about his eye-brows. He then made the barber ſhave his beard, and after went unconcerned into the bath as uſual. The next day, when Sura's accuſers were renewing their obloquy, Trajan informing them how he had ſpent the night, "If (cried he) Sura had "any deſigns againſt my life, he then had the "faireſt opportunity."

It had been happy for this great prince's memory, if he had ſhown equal clemency to all
U.C.860. his ſubjects; but, about the ninth year of his
A.D.107. reign, he was perſuaded to look upon the Chriſtians with a ſuſpicious eye. The extreme veneration which he profeſſed for the religion of the empire, ſet him ſedulouſly to oppoſe every innovation, and the progreſs of chriſtianity ſeemed to alarm him. A law had ſome time before been paſſed, in which all Heteriæ, or ſocieties diſſenting from the eſtabliſhed religion, were conſidered as illegal, being reputed nurſeries of impoſture and ſedition. Under the ſanction of this

law, the Chriſtians were perſecuted in all parts of the empire. Great numbers of them were put to death, as well by popular tumults as by edicts and judicial proceedings. In this proſecution, St. Clemens, biſhop of Rome, was condemned to be thrown into the ſea, with an anchor about his neck; St. Simeon, biſhop of Jeruſalem, at the age of an hundred and twenty, was ſcourged and crucified; and St. Ignatius, who had a particular diſpute with Trajan, at Antioch, was condemned to be thrown to wild beaſts, in the amphitheatre at Rome. However, the perſecution ceaſed after ſome time; for the emperor having advice from Pliny, the pro-conſul in Bithynia, of the innocence and ſimplicity of the Chriſtians, and of their inoffenſive and moral way of living, he ſuſpended their puniſhments. But a total ſtop was put to them upon Tiberianus, the governor of Paleſtine's, ſending him word, that he was wearied with executing the laws againſt the Galileans, who crowded to execution in ſuch multitudes, that he was at a loſs how to proceed. Upon this information, the emperor gave orders, that the Chriſtians ſhould not be ſought after; but, if any offered themſelves, that they ſhould ſuffer. In this manner the rage of perſecution ceaſed, and the emperor found leiſure to turn the force of his arms againſt the Armenians and Parthians, who

who now began to throw off all ſubmiſſion to Rome.

While he was employed in theſe wars, there was a dreadful inſurrection of the Jews in all parts of the empire. This wretched people, ſtill infatuated, and ever expecting ſome ſignal deliverer, took the advantage of Trajan's abſence in the Eaſt, to maſſacre all the Greeks and Romans whom they got into their power, without reluctance or mercy. This rebellion firſt began in Cyrene, a Roman province in Africa; from thence the flame extended to Egypt, and next to the iſland of Cyprus. Theſe places they, in a manner, diſpeopled with ungovernable fury. Their barbarities were ſuch, that they eat the fleſh of their enemies, wore their ſkins, ſawed them aſunder, caſt them to wild beaſts, made them kill each other, and ſtudied new torments by which to deſtroy them. However, theſe cruelties were of no long duration; the governors of the reſpective provinces making head againſt their tumultuous fury, ſoon treated them with retaliation of cruelty, and put them to death, not as human beings, but as outrageous peſts to ſociety. As the Jews had practiſed their cruelties in Cyprus particularly, a law was publickly enacted, by which it was made capital for any Jew to appear on the iſland.

During

During theſe bloody tranſactions, Trajan was proſecuting his ſucceſſes in the Eaſt. His firſt march was into Armenia, the king of which country had diſclaimed all alliance with Rome, and received the enſigns of royalty and dominion from the monarch of Parthia. However, upon the news of Trajan's expedition, his fears were ſo great, that he abandoned his country to the invader; while the greateſt part of his governors and nobility came ſubmiſſively to the emperor, acknowledging themſelves his ſubjects, and making him the moſt coſtly preſents. Having, in this manner, taken poſſeſſion of the whole country, and gotten the king into his power, he marched into the dominions of the king of Parthia. There entering the opulent kingdom of Meſopotamia, he reduced it into the form of a Roman province. From thence he went againſt the Parthians, marching on foot at the head of his army; in this manner, croſſing rivers, and conforming to all the ſeverities of diſcipline, which were impoſed upon the meaneſt ſoldier. His ſucceſſes againſt the Parthians were great and numerous. He conquered Syria and Chaldea; and took the famous city of Babylon. There, attempting to croſs the Euphrates, he was oppoſed by the enemy, who were reſolved to ſtop his paſſage; but he ſecretly cauſed boats to be made upon the adjoining mountains; and bringing them

to

to the water-ſide, paſſed his army with great expedition; not, however, without great ſlaughter on both ſides. From thence he traverſed large tracts of country, which had never before been invaded by a Roman army; and ſeemed to take a pleaſure in purſuing the ſame march which Alexander the Great had marked out before him. Having paſſed the rapid ſtream of the Tigris, he advanced to the city Cteſiphon, which he took, and opened himſelf a paſſage into Perſia; where he made many conqueſts that were rather ſplendid than ſerviceable.

After ſubduing all the country bordering on the Tigris, he marched ſouthward to the Perſian gulf, where he ſubdued a monarch who poſſeſſed a conſiderable iſland, made by the divided ſtreams of that river. Here winter coming on, he was in danger of loſing the greateſt part of his army by the inclemency of the climate, and the inundations of the river. He therefore with indefatigable pains fitted out a fleet, and ſailing down the Perſian gulf, entered the Indian ocean, conquering even to the Indies, and ſubduing a part of them to the Roman empire. He was prevented from purſuing further conqueſts in this diſtant country, by the revolt of many of the provinces he had already ſubdued, and by the ſcarcity of proviſions, which ſeemed to contradict the reports of the fertility of the countries he

was

was induced to invade. The inconveniences of increaſing age, alſo contributed to damp the ardour of this enterpriſe, which at one time he intended to purſue to the confines of the earth. Returning therefore along the Perſian gulf, and ſending the ſenate a particular account of all the nations he had conquered, the names of which alone compoſed a long catalogue, he prepared to puniſh thoſe countries which had revolted from him. He began by laying the famous city of Edeſſa, in Meſopotamia, in aſhes; and, in a ſhort ſpace of time, not only retook all thoſe places which had before acknowledged ſubjection, but conquered many other provinces, ſo as to make himſelf maſter of the moſt fertile kingdoms of all Aſia. In this train of ſucceſſes he ſcarce met with a repulſe, except before the city Atra, in the deſerts of Arabia. Wherefore, judging that this was a proper time for bounding his conqueſts, he reſolved to give a maſter to the countries he had ſubdued. With this reſolution he repaired to the city Cteſiphon, in Perſia; and there, with great ceremony, crowned Parthenaſpates king of Parthia, to the great joy of all his ſubjects. He eſtabliſhed another king alſo over the kingdom of Albania, near the Caſpian ſea. Then, placing governors and lieutenants in other provinces, he reſolved to return to his capital in a more magnificent manner

manner than any of his predeceſſors had done before him. He accordingly left Adrian general of all his forces in the Eaſt, and continued his journey towards Rome, where the moſt magnificent preparations were made for his arrival. However, he had not got farther than the province of Cilicia, when he found himſelf too weak to proceed in his uſual manner. He therefore ordered himſelf to be carried on ſhip-board, to the city of Seleucia, where he died of an apoplexy, having been attacked by that diſorder once before. During the time of his indiſpoſition, his wife Plotina conſtantly attended near him; and knowing the emperor's diſlike to Adrian, it is thought forged the will, by which he was adopted to ſucceed.

A.D.117. Trajan died in the ſixty-third year of his age, after a reign of nineteen years, ſix months, and fifteen days. How highly he was eſteemed by his ſubjects appears from their manner of bleſſing his ſucceſſors, always wiſhing them the fortune of Auguſtus, and the goodneſs of Trajan. His military virtues, however, upon which he chiefly valued himſelf, produced no real advantage to his country, and all his conqueſts diſappeared, when the power was withdrawn that enforced them.

But ſtill it may be aſſerted, that the Roman empire was never ſo large as when he left

left it, nor ſo formidable to the reſt of the world. And yet its ſtrength was much impaired; for being ſpread over ſo great an extent of territory, as it wanted the invigorating principle of patriotiſm amongſt its ſubjects to inſpire them in its defence, its bulk ſeemed rather a ſymptom of its diſeaſe than its vigour.

CHAP. XVI.

ADRIAN, the Fifteenth EMPEROR of ROME.

ADRIAN was by deſcent a Spaniard, and of the ſame city where Trajan was born. He was nephew to Trajan, and married to Sabina his grand niece. When Trajan was adopted to the empire, Adrian was a tribune of the army in Næſia, and ſent by the troops to congratulate the emperor on his advancement. But his brother-in-law, who deſired to have an opportunity of congratulating Trajan himſelf, ſupplied Adrian with a carriage that broke down on the way. Adrian, however, was reſolved to loſe no time, and performed the reſt of the journey on foot. This aſſiduity was very pleaſing to the emperor; but he diſliked Adrian from ſeveral more prevailing motives. He was expenſive and involved in

debt. He was, beſides, inconſtant, capricious, and apt to envy another's reputation. Theſe faults, in Trajan's opinion, could not be compenſated either by Adrian's learning or his talents. His great ſkill in the Greek and Latin languages, his intimate acquaintance with the laws of his country, and the philoſophy of the times, were no inducements to Trajan, who, being bred himſelf a ſoldier, deſired to have a military man to ſucceed him. For this reaſon it was that the dying emperor would by no means appoint a ſucceſſor; fearful, perhaps, of injuring his great reputation, by adopting a perſon that was unworthy. His death, therefore, was concealed for ſome time by Plotina, his wife, till Adrian had ſounded the inclinations of the army, and found them firm in his intereſts. They then produced a forged inſtrument, importing, that Adrian was adopted to ſucceed in the empire. By this artifice he was elected by all orders of the ſtate, though abſent from Rome, being then at Antioch, as general of the forces in the Eaſt.

Upon Adrian's election, his firſt care was to write to the ſenate, excuſing himſelf for aſſuming the empire without their previous approbation; imputing it to the haſty zeal of the army, who rightly judged that the ſenate ought not long to remain without an head.

He then began to purſue a courſe quite oppoſite to that of his predeceſſor, taking every method of declining war, and promoting the arts of peace. He was quite ſatisfied with preſerving the ancient limits of the empire, and ſeemed no way ambitious of extenſive conqueſt. For this reaſon he abandoned all the conqueſts which Trajan had made, judging them to be rather an inconvenience than an advantage to the empire. He made the river Euphrates the boundary of the empire, and placed the legions along its banks, to prevent the incurſions of the enemy.

Having thus ſettled the affairs of the Eaſt, and leaving Severus governor of Syria, he took his journey by land to Rome, ſending the aſhes of Trajan thither by ſea. Upon his approach to the city, he was informed that a magnificent triumph was preparing for him; but this he modeſtly declined, deſiring that theſe honours might be paid to Trajan's memory, which they had deſigned for him. In conſequence of this command, a moſt ſuperb triumph was decreed, in which Trajan's ſtatue was carried as the principal figure in the proceſſion, it being remarked that he was the only man that ever triumphed after he was dead. Not content with paying him theſe extraordinary honours, his aſhes were placed in a golden urn, upon the top of a column an

hundred and forty feet high. On this were engraven the particulars of all his exploits in baſſo relievo, a work of great labour, and which is ſtill remaining.

It was not an eaſy taſk to appear with any luſtre, after an emperor ſo loved and admired as Trajan; and yet the merits of his ſucceſſor ſeemed, in ſome meaſure, to conſole the people for their loſs. Adrian was one of the moſt remarkable of the Roman emperors for the variety of his endowments. He was highly ſkilful in all the exerciſes both of body and mind. He compoſed with great beauty, both in proſe and verſe; he pleaded at the bar, and was one of the beſt orators of his time. He was deeply verſed in the mathematicks, and no leſs ſkilful in phyſick. In drawing and painting, he was equal to the greateſt maſters; an excellent muſician, and ſung to admiration. Beſides theſe qualifications, he had an aſtoniſhing memory; he knew the names of all his ſoldiers, though never ſo long abſent. He could dictate to one, confer with another, and write himſelf, all at the ſame time time. He was remarkably expert in military diſcipline; he was ſtrong and very ſkilful in arms, both on horſeback and on foot, and frequently killed wild-boars, and even lions, in hunting.

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His moral virtues were not inferior to his accompliſhments. Upon his exaltation to the empire, he forgave an infinite number of debts due to the treaſury, remitting the large arrears to which the provinces were liable, and burning the bonds and regiſters of them in the public Forum. He refuſed to take the confiſcated eſtates of condemned perſons into his private coffers, but ordered them to be placed in the public treaſury. His moderation and clemency appeared by pardoning the injuries which he had received when he was a private man. One day meeting a perſon who had formerly been his moſt inveterate enemy, "My good friend "(cried he) you have eſcaped, for I am made "emperor." He had ſo great a veneration for the ſenate, and was ſo careful of not introducing unworthy perſons into it, that he told the captain of his guard, when he made him a ſenator, that he had no honours in his gift equal to what he then beſtowed. He was affable to his friends, and gentle to perſons of meaner ſtations; he relieved their wants, and viſited them in ſickneſs; it being his conſtant maxim, that he was an emperor not for his own good, but for the benefit of mankind.

Theſe were his virtues, which were contraſted by a ſtrange mixture of vices; or, to ſay the truth, he wanted ſtrength of mind to preſerve his general rectitude of character without de-

viation. Thus he is repreſented as proud and vain-glorious, envious and detractive, haſty and revengeful, inquiſitive into other men's affairs, and often induced by ſycophants and informers to acts of cruelty and injuſtice. He permitted the revival of the perſecution againſt the Chriſtians, and ſhowed many inſtances of a bad diſpoſition, which it was the whole ſtudy of his life to correct or to conceal.

But, however Adrian might have been, as to his private character, his conduct as an emperor appears moſt admirable, as all his public tranſactions ſeem dictated by the ſoundeſt policy, and the moſt diſintereſted wiſdom. He was ſcarce ſettled on the throne, when ſeveral of the northern barbarians, the Alani, the Sarmatians and the Dacians, began to make devaſtations on the empire. Theſe hardy nations, who had now found the way to conquer, by iſſuing from their foreſts, and then retiring upon the approach of a ſuperior force oppoſing them, began to be truely formidable to Rome. Adrian had thoughts of contracting the limits of the empire, by giving up ſome of the moſt remote and leaſt defenſible provinces; but in this he was over-ruled by his friends, who imagined that an extenſive frontier would intimidate an invading enemy. But though he complied with their remonſtrances, he broke down the bridge over the Danube, which

which his predeceſſor had built, ſenſible that the ſame paſſage which was open to him, was equally convenient to his barbarous neighbours.

While he was employed in compelling theſe nations to ſubmiſſion, a conſpiracy was diſcovered, carried on among four perſons of conſular dignity at home. Theſe had agreed to kill him, either while he was offering ſacrifice, or while he was hunting. Their deſigns, however, were timely diſcovered, and the conſpirators put to death, by order of the ſenate. Adrian took great pains to clear himſelf from the imputation of having had any hand in their execution; he had ſworn upon his advancement, to put no ſenator to death, and he now declared that the delinquents died without his permiſſion. But in order entirely to ſuppreſs the murmurs of the people upon this head, he diſtributed large ſums of money among them, and called off their attention from this act of ſeverity, to magnificent ſhows, and the various diverſions of the amphitheatre.

Having ſtaid a ſhort time at Rome, ſo as to ſee that all things were regulated and eſtabliſhed for the ſafety of the public, he prepared to viſit and take a view of his whole empire. It was one of his maxims, that an emperor ought to imitate the ſun, which diffuſes warmth and vigour over all parts of the

earth. He therefore took with him a ſplendid court, and a conſiderable force, and entered the province of Gaul, where he numbered all the inhabitants. From Gaul he went into Germany, from thence to Holland, and then paſſed over into Britain. There, reforming many abuſes, and reconciling the natives to the Romans; for the better ſecurity of the ſouthern parts of the kingdom, he built a wall of wood and earth, extending from the river Eden in Cumberland, to the Tyne in Northumberland, to prevent the incurſions of the Picts, and the other barbarous nations to the North. From Britain, returning through Gaul, he directed his journey to Spain, where he was received with great joy, as being a native of that country. There, wintering in the city of Tarragona, he called a meeting of the deputies from all the provinces, and ordained many things for the benefit of the nation. Happening, while he was in Spain, to walk in his garden, one of the ſervants of the houſe ran furiouſly at him, with a drawn ſword, to kill him; but the emperor warding off the blow, and cloſing with him, quickly diſarmed him, and delivering him to his guards, he ordered that he might have a phyſician to bleed him, conſidering the poor creature (which in fact he was) as a madman. From Spain, returning to Rome, he continued there

for ſome time, in order to prepare for his journey into the Eaſt, which was haſtened by a new invaſion of the Parthians. His approach compelling the enemy to peace, he purſued his travels without moleſtation. Arriving in Aſia Minor, he turned out of his way to viſit the famous city of Athens. There making a conſiderable ſtay, he was initiated into the Eleuſinian myſteries, which were accounted the moſt ſacred in the Pagan mythology; and took upon him the office of archon or chief magiſtrate of the place. In this place alſo, he remitted the ſeverity of the Chriſtian perſecution, at the repreſentation of Granianus, the pro-conſul of Aſia, who repreſented the people of that perſuaſion as no way culpable. He was even ſo far reconciled to them, as to think of receiving Chriſt among the number of the Gods. After a winter's continuance at Athens, he went over into Sicily; and viſited Ætna, and the other curioſities of the place. Returning from thence once more to Rome, after a ſhort ſtay he prepared ſhips and croſſed over into Africa. There he ſpent much time in regulating abuſes, and reforming the government; in deciding controverſies, and erecting magnificent buildings. Among the reſt, he ordered Carthage to be rebuilt; calling it, after his own name, Adrianople. Again returning to Rome, where he ſtayed but a very little time, he travelled a

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ſecond time into Greece, paſſed over into Aſia Minor, from thence he went into Syria, gave laws and inſtructions to all the neighbouring kings, whom he invited to come and conſult with him; he then entered Paleſtine, Arabia, and Egypt, where he cauſed Pompey's tomb, that had been long neglected, and almoſt covered with ſand, to be rebuilt and beautified. He alſo gave orders for the rebuilding of Jeruſalem, which was performed with great expedition, by the aſſiſtance of the Jews, who now began to conceive hopes of being reſtored to their long loſt kingdom. But theſe expectations only ſerved to aggravate their calamities; for being incenſed at the privileges which were granted the Pagan worſhippers in their new city, they fell upon the Romans and Chriſtians that were diſperſed throughout Judea, and unmercifully put them all to the ſword. In this cruel and deſperate undertaking they were chiefly incited by one Barcocab, an impoſtor; who, willing to be thought the Meſſiah, or, perhaps believing himſelf to be ſo, declared, that he himſelf was the ſtar foretold by Balaam; and that he was come down as a light from Heaven to reſcue them from bondage. Adrian was at Athens when this dangerous inſurrection began; wherefore, ſending a powerful body of men, under the command of Julius Severus, againſt them, this general obtained many ſignal,

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though bloody victories, over the insurgents. The war was concluded in two years, by the demolition of above a thousand of their best towns; and the destruction of near six hundred thousand men in battle.

He then banished all those that remained, out of Judea; and, by a public decree, forbade any to come within view of their native soil. This insurrection was soon after followed by a dangerous irruption of the barbarous nations to the northward of the empire; who entering Media with great fury, and passing through Armenia, carried their devastations as far as Cappadocia. Adrian preferring peace, upon any terms, to an unprofitable war, bought them off by large sums of money; so that they returned peaceably into their native wilds, to enjoy their plunder, and meditate fresh invasions.

Adrian having now spent thirteen years in travelling through his dominions, and reforming the abuses of the empire, resolved, at length, to return and end all his fatigues at Rome. Nothing could be more grateful to the people than his present resolution of coming to reside, for the rest of his days, among them; they received him with the loudest demonstrations of joy; and, though he now began to grow old and unwieldy, he remitted not the least of his former assiduity and attention to the public welfare. His chief amuse-

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ment was in converſing with the moſt celebrated men in every art and ſcience, frequently boaſting that he thought no kind of knowledge inconſiderable, or to be neglected, either in his private or public capacity. This deſire of knowledge was laudable, if kept within bounds: but he ſeemed to affect univerſal excellence; and even envied all, who aſpired at an equal reputation in any of the arts with himſelf. It is ſaid, that he ordered Apollodorus, the architect, to be put to death, only for too freely remarking upon the errors of ſome ſtructure erected from the emperor's deſigns. But be this as it may, he took great delight in diſputing among the learned men, and the philoſophers who attended him; nor were they leſs careful in granting him that ſuperiority he ſeemed ſo eagerly to affect. Favorinus, a man of great reputation at court for philoſophy, happening one day to diſpute with him upon ſome philoſophical ſubject, acknowledged himſelf to be overcome. His friends blamed him for thus giving up the argument, when he might eaſily have purſued it with ſucceſs: "How (replied Favorinus, who was probably a better courtier than philoſopher) would "you have me contend with a man who is "maſter of thirty legions?" Adrian was ſo fond of literary fame, that we are told, he wrote his own life, and afterwards gave it to his

his ſervants to publiſh under their names. But whatever might have been his weakneſs in aiming at univerſal reputation, he was in no part of his reign remiſs, in attending the duties of his exalted ſtation. He ordered the knights and ſenators never to appear in public, but in the proper habits of their orders. He forbade maſters to kill their ſlaves, as had been before allowed; but ordained that they ſhould be tried by the laws enacted againſt capital offences. A law ſo juſt, had he done nothing more, deſerved to have enſured his reputation with poſterity, and to have made him dear to mankind. He ſtill further extended the lenity of the laws to thoſe unhappy men, who had been long thought too mean for juſtice. If a maſter was found killed in his houſe, he would not allow all his ſlaves to be put to the torture, as formerly, but only ſuch as might have perceived or prevented the murder.

In ſuch cares he conſumed the greateſt part of his time; but, at laſt, finding the duties of his ſtation daily increaſing, and his own ſtrength proportionally decreaſing, he reſolved upon adopting a ſucceſſor, whoſe merits might deſerve, and whoſe courage ſecure, his exaltation. After many deliberations, he made choice of Lucius Commodus, whoſe bodily infirmities rendered him unfit for a truſt of ſuch importance. Of this, after ſome time,

Adrian,

Adrian ſeemed ſenſible, declaring, that he repented of having choſen ſo feeble a ſucceſſor, and ſaying, That he had leaned againſt a mouldering wall. However, Commodus ſoon after dying, the emperor immediately adopted Marcus Antoninus, afterwards ſurnamed the Pious; but previouſly obliged him to adopt two others, namely, Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, all of whom afterwards ſucceeded to the empire.

While he was thus careful in appointing a ſucceſſor, his bodily infirmities daily increaſed; and, at length, his pain becoming inſupportable, he vehemently deſired that ſome of his attendants would diſpatch him. Antoninus, however, would by no means permit any of his domeſticks to be guilty of ſo great an impiety, but uſed all the arts in his power to reconcile the emperor to ſuſtain life. At one time he produced a woman, who pretended that ſhe was warned in a dream, that he ſhould recover his health; at another, a man was brought from Pannonia, who gave him the ſame aſſurances. Nevertheleſs, Adrian's pains increaſing every day, he frequently cried out, "How miſerable "a thing it is to ſeek death, and not to find it!" He engaged one Maſtor, partly by threats, and partly by intreaties, to promiſe to diſpatch him; but Maſtor, inſtead of obeying, conſulted his own ſafety by flight; ſo that he, who was maſter of the lives of millions, was not able to

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diſpoſe of his own. In this deplorable exigence, he reſolves on going to Baiæ, where the tortures of his diſeaſes increaſing, they affected his underſtanding, ſo that he gave orders that ſeveral perſons ſhould be put to death; which Antoninus, according to his uſual wiſdom, never meant to obey. Continuing, for ſome time, in theſe excruciating circumſtances, the emperor was at laſt reſolved to obſerve no regimen, often ſaying, That kings died merely by the multitude of their phyſicians. This conduct ſerved to haſten that death he ſeemed ſo ardently to deſire; and it was probably joy upon its approach which dictated the celebrated ſtanzas* which are ſo well known, in repeating which he expired:

In

* Animula vagula blandula,
Hoſpes comeſque corporis;
Quæ nunc abibis in loca?
Pallidula, rigida, nudula,
Nec ut ſoles dabis jocos.

Thus tranſlated by Mr. Pope:

Oh fleeting ſpirit, wandering fire,
That long has warm'd my tender breaſt,
Wilt thou no more my frame inſpire?
No more a pleaſing chearful gueſt?
Whither, ah! whither art thou flying,
To what dark, undiſcover'd ſhore?
Thou ſeem'ſt all trembling, ſhivering, dying,
And wit and humour are no more.

In this manner died Adrian, in the ſixty-ſecond year of his age, after a proſperous reign of twenty-one years, and eleven months. His private character ſeems to be a mixture of virtues and vices: but as a prince, perhaps none of his predeceſſors ſhowed more wiſdom, or ſuch laudable aſſiduity. He was the firſt emperor who reduced the laws of the empire into one ſtanding code. Government received the greateſt ſtability from his councils, and a tranquillity more laſting than could be expected from ſuch fierce neighbours abroad, and ſuch a degenerate race of citizens at home.

CHAP. XVII.

ANTONINUS PIUS, the Sixteenth EMPEROR of ROME.

U.C. 891. A.D. 186. TITUS ANTONINUS, whom Adrian had appointed as his ſucceſſor, was born in the city of Neſmis in Gaul. His father was a nobleman of an ancient family, who had enjoyed the higheſt honours of the ſtate. At the time of his ſucceeding to the throne, he was above fifty years old, and had paſſed through many of the moſt important offices of the ſtate with great integrity and application. His virtues in private life,

life were no way impaired by exaltation, as he ſhowed himſelf one of the moſt excellent princes for juſtice, clemency, and moderation. His morals were ſo pure, that he was uſually compared to Numa, and was ſurnamed the Pious, both for his tenderneſs to his predeceſſor Adrian, when dying, and his particular attachment to the religion of his country.

In the beginning of his reign, he made it his particular ſtudy, to promote only the moſt deſerving to employments; he moderated many impoſts and tributes, and commanded that all ſhould be levied without partiality or oppreſſion. His liberality was ſuch, that he even parted with all his own private fortune in relieving the diſtreſſes of the neceſſitous. Againſt which, when Fauſtina, the empreſs, ſeemed to remonſtrate, he reprehended her folly, alledging, That as ſoon as he was poſſeſſed of the empire, he quitted all private intereſts; and having nothing of his own, all properly belonged to the public. He acted differently from his predeceſſors with regard to travelling, and ſeldom left Rome, ſaying, That he was unwilling to burthen his ſubjects with oſtentatious and unneceſſary expences. By this frugal conduct, he was the better enabled to ſuppreſs all the inſurrections that happened during his reign, either in Britain, in Dacia, or in Germany. Thus he was at once reve-

reneed and loved by mankind, being accounted rather a patron, and father of his ſubjects, than a maſter and commander. Ambaſſadors were ſent to him from the remoteſt parts of Hyrcania, Bactria, and India, all offering him their alliance and friendſhip; ſome deſiring him to appoint them a king, whom they ſeemed proud to obey. He ſhowed not leſs paternal care towards the oppreſſed Chriſtians; in whoſe favour he declared, That if any ſhould proceed to diſturb them, merely upon the account of their religion, that ſuch ſhould undergo the ſame puniſhment which was intended againſt the accuſed.

This clemency was attended with no leſs affability and freedom; but, at the ſame time, he was upon his guard, that his indulgence to his friends ſhould not tempt them into inſolence or oppreſſion. He, therefore, took care, that his courtiers ſhould not ſell their favours, nor take any gratuity from their ſuitors. In the time of a great famine in Rome, he provided for the wants of the people, and maintained great numbers with bread and wine all the time of its continuance. When any of his ſubjects attempted to inflame him with a paſſion for military glory, he would anſwer, That he more deſired the preſervation of one ſubject than the deſtruction of a thouſand enemies.

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He was an eminent rewarder of learned men, to whom he gave large penſions and great honours, drawing them from all parts of the world. Among the reſt, he ſent for Apollonius, the famous ſtoic philoſopher, to inſtruct his adopted ſon, Marcus Aurelius, whom he had previouſly married to his daughter. Apollonius being arrived at Rome, the emperor deſired his attendance; but the other arrogantly anſwered, That it was a ſcholar's duty to wait upon the maſter, and not the maſter's upon the ſcholar. To this reply, Antoninus only returned with a ſmile, "That it was ſurpriſing how Apol-" lonius, who made no difficulty of coming " from Greece to Rome, ſhould think it ſo hard " to walk from one part of Rome to another;" and immediately ſent Marcus Aurelius to him. While the good emperor was thus employed, in making mankind happy, in directing their conduct by his own example, or reproving their follies with the keenneſs of rebuke, he was ſeized with a violent fever at Lorium, a pleaſure-houſe at ſome diſtance from Rome; where, finding himſelf ſenſibly decaying, he ordered his friends and principal officers to attend him. In their preſence he confirmed the adoption of Marcus Aurelius, without once naming Lucius Verus, who had been joined by Adrian with him in the ſucceſſion; then commanding the golden ſtatue of Fortune, which was always in the chamber

of the emperors, to be removed to that of his ſucceſſor, he expired, in the ſeventy-fifth year of his age, after a proſperous reign of twenty-two years, and almoſt eight months.

CHAP. XVIII.

MARCUS AURELIUS, otherwiſe called ANTONINUS the PHILOSOPHER, the Seventeenth EMPEROR of ROME.

U.C.914. A.D.161. THE death of Antoninus was univerſally lamented throughout the empire, and his funeral oration pronounced, as uſual, by his adopted ſon, Marcus Aurelius; who, though left ſole ſucceſſor to the throne, took Lucius Verus as his aſſociate and equal, in governing the ſtate. Thus Rome, for the firſt time, ſaw itſelf governed by two ſovereigns, of equal power, but of very different merit and pretenſions. Aurelius was the ſon of Annius Verus, of an ancient and illuſtrious family, which claimed its original from Numa. Lucius Verus was the ſon of Commodus, who had been adopted by Adrian, but died before he ſucceeded to the throne. Aurelius was as remarkable for his virtues and accompliſhments, as his partner in the empire was for his ungovernable paſſions and debauched morals. The

one was an example of the greateſt goodneſs and wiſdom; the other, of ignorance, ſloth, and extravagance.

The two emperors had been ſcarce ſettled on the throne, when the empire was attacked on every ſide, from the barbarous nations by which it was ſurrounded. The Catti invaded Germany and Rhætia, ravaging all with fire and ſword; but were, after ſome time, repelled by Victorinus. The Britons likewiſe revolted but were repreſſed by Califurnius. But the Parthians, under their king Vologeſus, made an irruption more dreadful than either of the former; deſtroying the Roman legions in Armenia; then entering Syria, and driving out the Roman governor, and filling the whole country with terror and confuſion. In order to ſtop the progreſs of this barbarous irruption, Verus himſelf went in perſon, being accompanied by Aurelius part of the way, who did all in his power, both by giving him advice and proper attendants, to correct or reſtrain his vices.

However, theſe precautions were fruitleſs: Verus ſoon grew weary of all reſtraint; he neglected every admonition; and, thoughtleſs of the urgency of his expedition, plunged himſelf into every kind of debauchery. Theſe exceſſes on his journey brought on a violent fever, which his conſtitution was ſufficiently ſtrong to

get over; but nothing could correct his vicious inclinations. Upon his entering Antioch, he reſolved to give an indulgence to every appetite, without attending to the fatigues of war. There, in one of its ſuburbs, which was called Daphne, and from the ſweetneſs of the air, the beauty of its groves, the richneſs of its gardens, and the freſhneſs of its fountains, ſeemed formed for pleaſure, he rioted in exceſſes unknown, even to the voluptuous Greeks; leaving all the glory of the field to his lieutenants, who were ſent to repreſs the enemy. Theſe, however, fought with great ſucceſs; Statius Priſcus took Artazata; Martius put Vologeſus to flight, took Seleucia, plundered and burnt Babylon and Cteſiphon, and demoliſhed the magnificent palace of the kings of Parthia. In a courſe of four years, during which the war continued, the Romans entered far into the Parthian country, and entirely ſubdued it; but upon their return, their army was waſted to leſs than half its former number, by peſtilence and famine. However, this was no impediment to the vanity of Verus, who reſolved to enjoy the honours of a triumph, ſo hardly earned by others. Wherefore, having appointed a king over the Armenians, and finding the Parthians entirely ſubdued, he aſſumed the title of Armenicus and Parthicus; and then returned to Rome, to partake of a triumph with Aurelius, which was accord-

accordingly ſolemniſed with great pomp and ſplendour.

During the courſe of this expedition, which continued for ſome years, Aurelius was ſedulouſly intent upon diſtributing juſtice and happineſs to his ſubjects at home. He firſt applied himſelf to the regulation of public affairs, and to the correcting ſuch faults as he found in the laws and policy of the ſtate. In this endeavour, he ſhowed a ſingular reſpect for the ſenate, often permitting them to determine without appeal; ſo that the commonwealth ſeemed in a manner once more revived under his equitable adminiſtration. Beſides, ſuch was his application to buſineſs, that he often employed ten days together upon the ſame ſubject, maturely conſidering it on all ſides, and ſeldom departing from the ſenate-houſe till, night coming on, the aſſembly was diſmiſſed by the conſul. But while thus glorioufly occupied, he was daily mortified with accounts of the enormities of his colleague, being repeatedly aſſured of his vanity, lewdneſs, and extravagance. However, feigning himſelf ignorant of theſe exceſſes, he judged marriage to be the beſt method of reclaiming him; and therefore ſent him his daughter Lucilla, a woman of great beauty, whom Verus married at Antioch. But even this was found ineffectual: Lucilla proved of a diſpoſition very unlike her father; and, inſtead of correcting her huſband's extravagancies,

only contributed to inflame them. Yet Aurelius ſtill hoped, that, upon the return of Verus to Rome, his preſence would keep him in awe; and that happineſs would at length be reſtored to the ſtate. But in this alſo he was diſappointed. His return only ſeemed fatal to the empire; for his army carried back the plague from Parthia, and diſſeminated the infection into all the provinces through which it paſſed.

Nothing could exceed the miſerable ſtate of the empire ſhortly after the return of Verus. In this horrid picture was repreſented an emperor, unawed by example, or the calamities ſurrounding him, giving way to unheard-of debaucheries. A raging peſtilence ſpreading terror and deſolation through all parts of the weſtern world; earthquakes, famines, and inundations, ſuch as had never before happened; the products of the earth, throughout all Italy, devoured by locuſts; all the barbarous nations ſurrounding the empire, the Germans, the Sarmatians, the Quadi, and Marcomanni, taking advantage of its various calamities, and making irruptions even into Italy. The prieſts doing all they could to put a ſtop to the miſeries of the ſtate, by attempting to appeaſe the gods; vowing and offering numberleſs ſacrifices; celebrating all the ſacred rites that had ever been known in Rome; and exhibiting the ſolemnity called Lectiſternia, ſeven days together. To crown

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the whole, theſe enthuſiaſts, not ſatisfied with the impending calamities, created others, by aſcribing the diſtreſſes of the ſtate to the impieties of the Chriſtians alone; ſo that a violent perſecution was ſeen raging in all parts of the empire; in which Juſtin Martyr, St. Polycarp biſhop of Smyrna, and an infinite number of others, ſuffered martyrdom.

In this ſcene of univerſal tumult, deſolation, and diſtreſs, there was nothing left but the virtues and the wiſdom of one man alone to reſtore tranquillity, and bring back happineſs to the empire. Aurelius began his endeavours by marching againſt the Marcomanni and Quadi, taking Verus with him, who reluctantly left the ſenſual delights of Rome for the fatigues of a camp. They came up with the Marcomanni near the city of Aquileia, and, after a furious engagement, routed their whole army: then purſuing the fugitives acroſs the Alps, overcame them in ſeveral conteſts, and, at laſt, entirely defeating them, returned into Italy without any conſiderable loſs. As the winter was far advanced, U.C.922. A.D.169. Verus was determined upon going from Aquileia to Rome: in this journey he was ſeized with an apoplexy which put an end to his life, being thirty-nine years old, having reigned nine in conjunction with Aurelius. Suſpicion, which ever attends the fate of princes, did not fail to aſcribe his death to different cauſes.

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Some ſay that he was poiſoned by the empreſs Fauſtina, ſome by his own wife Lucilla, who was jealous of him for the paſſion he bore his ſiſter Fabia: and others were found to ſay that Aurelius was not ignorant of it; but the number of theſe reports ought to deſtroy the credibility of all.

Aurelius, who had hitherto felt the fatigues of governing not only an empire, but an emperor, being now left to himſelf, began to act with greater diligence, and more figure than ever. His firſt care was to marry his daughter Lucilla to Claudius Pompeianus, a man of moderate fortune and humble ſtation, but eminent for his honeſty, courage, and wiſdom. He then left Rome to finiſh the war againſt the Marcomanni, who joining with the Quadi, the Sarmatians, the Vandals, and other barbarous nations, renewed hoſtilities with unuſual rage and devaſtation. They had ſome time before attacked Vindex, præfect of the prætorian bands, and in a general battle near the Danube, deſtroyed no leſs than twenty thouſand of his men. They even purſued the Romans as far as Aquileia, and would have taken the city, had not the emperor led his troops in perſon to oppoſe them. Aurelius having repulſed the enemy, continued his endeavours to prevent them from making future inroads. He ſpent in this laborious undertaking no leſs than

five

five years, harraſſing theſe barbarous nations, ſupporting the moſt dreadful fatigues, and ſupplying, by the exceſs of his courage, the defects of a delicate conſtitution. The ſtoick philoſophy, in which he was bred, had taught him a ſimplicity of living, which ſerved as an example to the whole army. The common ſoldier could not murmur at any hardſhips he was put upon, when he ſaw the emperor himſelf every hour undergoing greater auſterities with chearful reſignation. By this conduct, Aurelius ſo wearied out the enemy with repeated attacks, that he at laſt conſtrained them to accept of ſuch terms of peace as he thought fit to impoſe, and thus returned in triumph to Rome.

Upon the emperor's return to Rome, he began his uſual endeavours to benefit mankind by a further reformation of the internal policy of the ſtate. He ordered that no enquiry ſhould be made after the fortune of deceaſed perſons who had been dead five years. He moderated the public expences, and leſſened the number of ſhows and ſports which were exhibited on the amphitheatre. He particularly took the poor under his protection; he found ſuch pleaſure in relieving their wants, that he conſidered his ability to ſupply the dictates of his compaſſion, as one of the greateſt happineſſes of his life. He laboured inceſſantly

to reſtrain the luxuries of the great, he prohibited the uſe of chariots and litters to perſons of inferior ſtation, and endeavoured by all means to correct the lewdneſs and diſorders of women.

But his laudable endeavours were ſoon interrupted by a renewal of the former wars. The barbarians no ſooner perceived his army withdrawn, than they took up arms once more, and renewed their ravages with greater fury than before. They had now drawn over to their ſide all the nations from Illyricum, to the fartheſt parts of Gaul. Aurelius, therefore, again ſaw himſelf ſurrounded with difficulties; his army had before been waſted by the plague, and frequent engagements, and his treaſures entirely exhauſted. In order to remedy theſe inconveniences, he increaſed his forces, by enliſting ſlaves, gladiators, and the banditti of Dalmatia.

To raiſe money, he ſold all the moveables belonging to the empire, and all the rich furniture which had been depoſited in the cabinets of Adrian. This ſale, which continued for two months, produced ſo conſiderable a ſum, as to defray all the expences of the war. His next effort was to march forward, and croſs the Danube by a bridge of boats. He then attacked the enemy, gained ſeveral advantages, burnt their houſes and magazines of corn, and received the ſubmiſſions of ſuch as had inconſiderately

derately joined in the invaſion. The detail of his campaigns is but confuſedly related by hiſtorians; one battle in particular is mentioned, which might have proved fatal, had not ſome moſt ſurpriſing accidents interpoſed. This engagement was begun by the enemy's ſlingers acroſs a river which induced the Romans to ford it, and make a great ſlaughter of thoſe who attempted to defend its banks on the oppoſite ſide. The enemy, judging they ſhould be purſued, retired, having previouſly left ſome bodies of archers, covered by a ſquadron of horſe, to ſkirmiſh with the Romans, as if they deſigned to ſtop their progreſs. The Romans, with inconſiderate valour, attacking this forlorn hope, purſued them among a chain of barren mountains; where they found themſelves unexpectedly blocked up on every ſide. However, they continued fighting, notwithſtanding the diſadvantage of the place; but the enemy, prudently declined engaging, not willing to leave that victory to chance, which they expected from delay. At length, the exceſſive heat of the incloſed ſituation, the fatigues of long employment, together with a violent thirſt, totally diſheartened the Roman legions. They now found, that they could neither fight nor retreat; and that they muſt run upon certain danger, or become a prey to their barbarous enemies. In this deplorable exigence, while ſorrow and

deſpair

deſpair were their only companions, Aurelius ran through their ranks, and in vain endeavoured to re-kindle their hopes and their courage. Nothing was heard but groans and lamentations; nothing ſeen but marks of terror and deſolation. At this dreadful juncture, and juſt as the barbarians were ready to fall upon them, we are aſſured, by ſome writers, that the ſolemn prayers of a Chriſtian legion which was among them, produced ſuch a fall of rain, as inſtantly refreſhed the fainting army. The ſoldiers were ſeen holding their mouths and their helmets up to heaven, and receiving the ſhowers which came ſo wonderfully to their relief. The ſame clouds alſo which ſerved for their reſcue, at the ſame time diſcharged ſuch a terrible ſtorm of hail, accompanied with thunder, againſt the enemy, as aſtoniſhed and confounded them. By this unlooked-for aid, the Romans recovering ſtrength and courage, once more turned upon their purſuers, and cut them in pieces.

Such are the circumſtances of an engagement, acknowledged by pagan, as well as Chriſtian writers, only with this difference, that the latter aſcribe the victory to their own, the former to the prayers of their emperor. However this be, Aurelius ſeemed ſo ſenſible of miraculous aſſiſtance, that he immediately relaxed the perſecutions againſt the Chriſtians, and wrote to the

the ſenate in favour of their religion. Notwithſtanding this victory, the war continued for ſome months longer; but after many violent conflicts, the barbarians ſent to ſue for peace. The emperor impoſed conditions upon them, more or leſs ſevere, as he found them more or leſs diſpoſed to revolt; being actually reſolved to divide their territories into provinces, and ſubject them to the Roman empire. However, a freſh rebellion called him to the defence of his dominions at home.

Avidius Caſſius was one of the emperor's moſt favourite generals, and had been chiefly inſtrumental in obtaining the Roman ſucceſſes in Parthia. His principal merit ſeemed to conſiſt in his reſtoring the old diſcipline, and in pretending a violent regard for the commonwealth in its ancient form. But, in fact, all his ſeeming regard for freedom, was only to ſeize upon the liberties of his country for his own aggrandiſement. Wherefore, finding his ſoldiers (for he was left with an army in the Eaſt) willing to ſupport his pretenſions, he proclaimed himſelf emperor in Syria. One of his chief artifices to procure popularity was giving out, that he was deſcended from the famous Caſſius, who had conſpired againſt Cæſar; and, like him, he pretended, that his aims were for the re-eſtabliſhment of the commonwealth of Rome. He alſo cauſed it to be

be rumoured, that Aurelius was dead, to whoſe memory he affected to ſhow the greateſt reſpect. By ſuch pretences, he united a large body of men under his command, and, in a ſhort time, brought all the countries from Syria to Mount Taurus, under his ſubjection. Theſe proſperous beginnings ſerved to increaſe the emperor's activity, but not his apprehenſions. He prepared to oppoſe him without any marks of uneaſineſs for the event; telling his ſoldiers, That he would freely yield his empire to Avidius, if it ſhould be judged conducive to the public good; for, as to his own part, the only fruits he had from exaltation, were inceſſant labour and fatigue. "I am ready "(cried he) to meet Avidius before the ſenate, "and before you; and to yield him the em- "pire, without the effuſion of blood, or ſtri- "king a blow, if it ſhall be thought good for the "people. But Avidius will never ſubmit to "ſuch a tribunal; he who has been faithleſs to "his benefactor, can never rely upon any "man's profeſſions. He will not even, in caſe "of being worſted, rely upon me. And yet, "my fellow-ſoldiers, my only fear is, and I "ſpeak it with the greateſt ſincerity, leſt he "ſhould put an end to his own life; or leſt "ſome, thinking to do me a ſervice, ſhould "haſten his death. The greateſt hope that I "have, is to prove, that I can pardon the

"moſt

" moſt outrageous offences; to make him my " friend, in ſpite of his reluctance; and to " ſhow the world, that even civil wars may " have an happy iſſue."

In the mean time, Avidius, who well knew, that deſperate undertakings muſt have a ſpeedy execution, endeavoured to draw over Greece to his aſſiſtance; but the love which all mankind bore the good emperor, fruſtrated his expectations; he was unable to bring over a ſingle city to eſpouſe his intereſts. This repulſe ſeemed to turn the ſcale of his former fortunes. His officers and ſoldiers ſoon began to regard him with contempt; ſo that they at laſt ſlew him, in leſs than four months after their revolt. His head was brought to the emperor, who received it with regret, and ordered it an honourable interment. The reſt of the conſpirators were treated with great lenity; ſome few were baniſhed, but recalled ſoon after. This clemency was admired by ſome, and condemned by others; but the emperor little regarded the murmurs or the applauſe of the multitude; guided only by the goodneſs of his own diſpoſition, he did what, to him, ſeemed right, content and happy in ſelf-approbation. When ſome took the liberty of blaming his conduct, telling him, That Avidius would not have been ſo generous had he been conqueror; the emperor replied in this ſublime manner, " I never ſerved the

" gods ſo ill, or reigned ſo irregularly, " as to fear Avidius could ever be con- " queror."

Though Avidius was no more, yet Aurelius was anxious to bring thoſe who had been miſled by his example, to a proper ſenſe of their duty. He therefore took a journey into the Eaſt, where in all places, he at once charmed them with his affability, raiſed their admiration by his clemency, inſtructed them by precept, and improved them by example. The better to prevent ſuch revolts for the future, he ordained, That as Avidius was a native of the country in which he rebelled, no perſon, for the time to come, ſhould command in the place where he was born. In this journey, the empreſs Fauſtina, was unexpectedly ſeized with a violent diſtemper, and died. She was a woman, whoſe wanton life gave great ſcandal to the dignity of her ſtation; however, her paſſive huſband, either could not, or at leaſt, affected not, to ſee her enormities, but willingly admitted the ill-deſerved honours, which the ſenate importunately decreed to her memory.

In his way to Rome, he viſited Athens, where he conferred many honours on the inhabitants, and eſtabliſhed profeſſors in all the ſciences, with munificent ſalaries for the encouragement of learning. Upon his landing in Italy, he quitted his ſoldier's habit, as alſo did

his army; and made his entry into Rome in the gown which was uſually worn in peace. As he had been abſent almoſt eight years, he diſtributed to each citizen eight pieces of gold, and remitted all the debts due to the treaſury for ſixty years paſt. At the ſame time he nominated his ſon Commodus, to ſucceed him in the empire, and made him a partner in his triumphal entry. He then retired for ſome time to a country ſeat, where, by the ſtudy of philoſophy, he delighted his mind, and regulated his conduct; he uſually called it his mother, in oppoſition to the court, which he conſidered as his ſtep-mother. He alſo was frequently heard to ſay, "That the "people were happy whoſe philoſophers were "kings, or whoſe kings were philoſophers." He, in fact, was one of the moſt conſiderable men then in being; and though he had been born in the meaneſt ſtation, his merits as a writer, would have inſured him immortality. But it was not with him mere ſpeculation, his practice was entirely guided by the principles of ſtoiciſm; and his tranquillity was ſuch, that he was never obſerved to feel any emotion, or to change countenance, either in joy or in ſorrow. His chief maſters were Apollonius of Chalcis, and Sextus Cheronenſis, grandſon to the famous Plutarch; theſe ſhared his bounty, as likewiſe did all the learned men of his time. He had learned the art of ſo blending liberality with

the moſt frugal œconomy, that he ſeemed rather the equitable guardian of another's wealth, than the poſſeſſor of his own. He was ſo ſenſible that few underſtood the art of giving, that he built a temple to the goddeſs who preſided over benefits.

In this manner having reſtored proſperity to his ſubjects, and peace to mankind, he expected in the decline of life to reſt from future toils. But it was his fortune to be ever employed. News was brought him, that the Scythians, and barbarous nations of the North, were again in arms, and invading the empire with furious impetuoſity. He, therefore, once more reſolved to expoſe his aged perſon in the defence of his country, and made ſpeedy preparations to oppoſe the barbarians. He requeſted the ſenate, for the firſt time, to advance money out of the public treaſury; and though it was in his power to take what ſums he thought proper without their conſent, yet he declared that emperors had no private property, not ſo much as the palace in which they dwelt. The people, whoſe love to the emperor daily increaſed, finding him making preparations to leave them, and reſolved to expoſe himſelf in a dangerous war, aſſembled themſelves before his palace, beſeeching him not to depart, till he had given them inſtructions for their future conduct; ſo that if the gods ſhould take him

him to themſelves, they might, by his aſſiſtance, continue in the ſame paths of virtue, into which he had led them by his example. This was a requeſt which this truly great emperor was highly pleaſed in obeying; he ſpent three whole days in giving them ſhort maxims, by which they might regulate their lives; and, having finiſhed his lectures, departed upon his expedition, amidſt the prayers and lamentations of all his ſubjects. The particulars of theſe campaigns are not related by hiſtorians; we can only ſay, that he fought ſeveral battles, where the victory was always owing to his prudence, courage, and example. He was conſtantly at the head of his army, and always in places the moſt expoſed to danger. He built many forts, and ſo diſpoſed his garriſons, as to keep all his barbarous neighbours in awe. It was upon going to open his third campaign, that he was ſeized with the plague at Vienna, which ſtopped the progreſs of his arms. Nothing, however, could abate his deſire of being beneficial to mankind; for though his ſubmiſſion to the will of Providence made him meet the approaches of death with tranquillity, his fears for the youth and unpromiſing diſpoſition of Commodus, his ſon and ſucceſſor, ſeemed to give him great uneaſineſs, and aggravated the pangs of diſſolution. Struggling with this apprehenſion, and fluctuating between hope

and fear, he addreſſed his friends and the principal officers that were gathered round his bed; telling them, That as his ſon was going to loſe a father, he hoped he would find many fathers in them; that they would direct his youth, and give him proper inſtructions for the public benefit as well as his own. "Make him more "particularly ſenſible (continued the dying "emperor) that not all the riches and honours "of this world, are ſufficient to ſatisfy the luxury and ambition of a tyrant; nor are the "ſtrongeſt guards and armies able to defend "him from the juſt reward of his crimes. Aſſure him, that cruel princes never enjoy a "long and peaceful reign; and that all the real "delights of power, are reſerved only for thoſe "whoſe clemency and mildneſs have gained "the hearts of the people. It muſt be yours to "inform him, that obedience by conſtraint, is "never ſincere; and that he who would expect "fidelity among mankind, muſt gain it from "their affections, not their fears. Lay before "him the difficulty, and yet the neceſſity, of "ſetting bounds to his paſſions, as there are "none ſet to his power. Theſe are the truths "to which he ought ever to attend; by ſteadily "inculcating theſe, you will have the ſatisfaction of forming a good prince, and the "pleaſure of paying my memory the nobleſt of "all ſervices, ſince you will thus render it im-

"mortal."

" mortal." As he was ſpeaking theſe laſt words, he was ſeized with a weakneſs which ſtopped his utterance, and which brought him to his end the day following. He died in the fifty-ninth year of his age, having reigned nineteen years and ſome days.

It ſeemed as if the whole glory and proſperity of the Roman empire died with Aurelius. From thence forward we are to behold a train of emperors either vicious or impotent, either wilfully guilty, or unable to aſſert the dignity of their ſtation. We are to behold an empire grown too great, ſinking by its own weight, ſurrounded by barbarous and ſucceſsful enemies without, and torn by ambitious and cruel factions within; the principles of the times wholly corrupted; philoſophy attempting to regulate the minds of men without the aid of religion; and the warmth of patriotiſm entirely evaporated, by being diffuſed in too wide a circle. We ſhall ſtill further find the people becoming dull, as they grow impotent; their hiſtorians cool and ſpiritleſs in the moſt intereſting narrations, and the convulſions of the greateſt empire upon earth, deſcribed in childiſh points, or languid prolixity.

CHAP. XIX.

COMMODUS, the Eighteenth EMPEROR of ROME.

U.C. 933. A.D. 180. THE merits of Aurelius procured Commodus an eaſy acceſſion to the throne. He was acknowledged emperor, firſt by the army, then by the ſenate and people, and ſhortly after by all the provinces. But though he owed the empire to the adoption of his ſuppoſed father, many were of opinion, that he was the ſpurious iſſue of a gladiator; his own conduct afterwards, and the wanton character of his mother Fauſtina, having, perhaps, given riſe to the report. He was about nineteen years of age when he entered upon the empire; his perſon was comely and robuſt: no man was more expert in all bodily exerciſes; he frequently fought with gladiators, and always came off victorious; he threw the javelin, and ſhot from the bow with ſuch wonderful addreſs, as almoſt exceeds credibility. He never miſſed hitting and killing the fleeteſt animals, though upon full ſpeed, and this in any part of their bodies he aimed at. He killed, upon a certain occaſion, an hundred lions let looſe all at once upon the amphitheatre. He ſhot birds flying in

in the air with unerring aim, and cut off the heads of an hundred oſtriches, in their moſt rapid motion, with his arrows headed in the ſhape of an half moon.

But it had been happy for himſelf and mankind, if he had cultivated the mental exerciſes with as much attention as thoſe of the body. His whole reign is but a tiſſue of wantonneſs and folly, cruelty and injuſtice, rapacity and corruption. There is ſo ſtrong a ſimilitude between his conduct, and that of Domitian, that a reader might be apt to imagine he was peruſing an account of the ſame reign.

He was received, upon his entrance into Rome, with a tranſport of applauſe from the people, and, for ſome time, he ſhowed himſelf worthy of their affection. But ſoon, the levity of his temper and the corrupt example of his favourite companions, turned him to the baſeſt, meaneſt purſuits. He went with his aſſociates to taverns and brothels; ſpent the day in feaſting, and the night in the moſt abominable debaucheries, having no leſs than three hundred females, and as many males, for deteſtable purpoſes. He committed inceſt, as Caligula did, with all his ſiſters. He ſometimes went about the markets in a frolick, with ſmall wares as a petty chapman; ſometimes he imitated an horſe-courſer; and, at other times, drove his own chariot in a ſlave's habit.

Thoſe

Thoſe he chiefly promoted reſembled himſelf, being the companions of his pleaſures or the miniſters of his cruelty. He took little care of the government, committing all the conduct of it to one Perennius, a perſon chiefly remarkable for his avarice and cruelty. In conſequence of the enormities of this miniſter, a conſpiracy was formed againſt Commodus in the beginning of his reign, in which his ſiſter Lucilla, with her huſband Pompeianus were principally concerned. The perſon employed to kill the emperor was one Quintianus, who coming up to him in a dauntleſs manner, and holding up his dagger, cried out, "The ſenate ſends "thee this." But this unguarded manner of proceeding fruſtrated his aim; for one of the guards juſt then ſeiſing his arm, prevented the fatal blow, and, he ſoon after, made a diſcovery of all his accomplices. Lucilla, Pompeianus, and Quintianus were executed; many other perſons, wholly innocent, ſhared the ſame fate. In this manner Perennius proceeded ſacrificing numbers of the ſenate, as pretended accomplices, but in reality with a view of ſeiſing upon their eſtates and fortunes; ſo that being thus grown extremely rich, he began to think of gaining the empire for himſelf, and made ſome progreſs in the attempt; but his deſign becoming apparent, Commodus ſeemed to rouze from his lethargy, and ordered both him and his

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ſons, who had been ſeen to draw the legions to revolt, to immediate execution.

Two conſpirators, thus diſcovered and puniſhed, only ſerved to render the emperor ſtill more cruel and ſuſpicious, and theſe cruelties begot new revolts. One Maturnus, at the head of a numerous banditti, waſted Spain and Gaul, and reſolved to attempt the empire itſelf. In order to effect this, upon a certain feſtival, he ordered ſome of his ſoldiers to mix with the emperor's guards, and then aſſaſſinate him. But his own party, in hopes of advantage, betrayed their employer, and he was executed, with many others ſoon after. It was about this time alſo, that Cleander, the emperor's chief favourite, fell a ſacrifice to the indignation of the populace, for his haughty carriage towards them. Another favourite, whoſe name was Julian, was put to death by the emperor's command; and ſhortly after a third (for this vicious prince could not reign without a favourite) who was called Regillius, was executed in the ſame manner. To theſe ſucceeded the murder of his wife Criſpina, and his father's couſin-german, Fauſtina, and numberleſs others, whoſe virtues, or fortunes, rendered them obnoxious to his capricious cruelty. If any perſon deſired to be revenged on an enemy, by bargaining with Commodus for a ſum of money, he was permitted to deſtroy him in ſuch manner

manner as he thought proper. He commanded a perſon to be caſt to the wild beaſts, for reading the life of Caligula in Suetonius. He ordered another to be thrown into a burning furnace, for accidentally over-heating his bath. He would ſometimes, when he was in a good humour, cut off men's noſes, under a pretence of ſhaving their beards; yet he was himſelf ſo jealous of all mankind, that he was obliged to be his own barber.

In the midſt of theſe cruelties his vanity never forſook him. Inſtead of being content with numberleſs titles, which his flattering ſenate were daily offering, he was rather willing to aſſume ſuch as were moſt agreeable to himſelf. He, at one time, commanded himſelf to be ſtyled Hercules, the ſon of Jupiter; and, the better to imitate that hero, he carried a club, and dreſſed himſelf in a lion's ſkin. But to amuſe the imagination as far as poſſible, and that he might appear to deſtroy giants and monſters, as the former had done, he dreſſed up ſeveral poor men and cripples, who were found begging in the ſtreets, like monſters, giving them ſponges to throw at him inſtead of ſtones, till falling furiouſly among them with his club, he deſtroyed them all. When tired of the Herculean habit, he aſſumed that of an Amazon. He, at laſt became ſo abandoned as to forſake his palace and live in a fencing ſchool; and ſatiated

with

with all his former titles, he aſſumed the name of a famous gladiator.

During theſe deplorable irregularities, the barbarians on the frontiers of the empire were daily gaining ground; and, though his lieutenants were ſucceſsful againſt the Britons, the Moors, the Dacians, the Germans, and Pannonians; yet the empire was daily declining, ſince their numbers ſeemed to increaſe by defeat, ſo that neither treaties could bind, nor victories repel them. In the mean time, the emperor's actions were become ſo odious to all mankind, and ſo contemptible to the citizens of Rome, that his death was ardently deſired. At length, upon the feaſt of Janus, reſolving to fence naked before the people, as a common gladiator, three of his friends remonſtrated to him upon the indecency of ſuch a behaviour. Theſe were Lætius, his general, Electus, his chamberlain, and Marcia, a concubine, of whom he always appeared exceſſively fond. Their advice was attended with no other effect, than that of incenſing him againſt them, and inciting him to reſolve upon their deſtruction. It was his method, like that of Domitian, to ſet down the names of all ſuch as he intended to put to death in a roll, which he carefully kept by him. However, at this time, happening to lay the roll on his bed, while he was bathing in another room, it was taken up by a little boy, whom

whom he paſſionately loved. The child after playing with it for ſome time, brought it to Marcia, who was inſtantly alarmed at the contents. She immediately diſcovered her terrors to Lætus and Electus, who perceiving their dangerous ſituation, inſtantly reſolved upon the tyrant's death. After ſome deliberation, it was agreed upon to diſpatch him by poiſon. In conſequence of this, a draught, probably opium, was adminiſtered to him by the hands of Marcia, which beginning to operate, threw him into a heavy ſlumber. In order to conceal the fact, ſhe immediately cauſed the company to retire, under pretence of allowing him reſt; but finding him awake ſoon after, and taken with a violent vomiting, ſhe was greatly alarmed with fears of his recovery. In this exigence, conſulting with the reſt of the conſpirators, ſhe haſtily introduced a young man, called Narciſſus, and ſhowing him his own name among the number of thoſe whom Commodus had deſtined to deſtruction, ſhe prevailed upon him to aſſiſt in diſpatching the tyrant. He boldly undertook the dangerous taſk, ſo that the emperor was ſoon ſtrangled by their united efforts. In this manner died Commodus in the thirty-firſt year of his age, after an impious reign of twelve years and nine months; and, as if he gave the example, very few of his ſucceſſors eſcaped a violent death.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

PERTINAX, the Nineteenth EMPEROR of ROME.

COMMODUS was aſſaſſinated with ſuch ſecrecy and expedition, that few were, at that time, acquainted with the real circumſtances of his death. His body was wrapped up as a bale of uſeleſs furniture, and carried through the guards, moſt of whom were either drunk or aſleep. U.C.949. A.D.192.

Previous to the aſſaſſination, the conſpirators had fixed upon a ſucceſſor. This was Helvius Pertinax, whoſe virtues and courage rendered him worthy of the moſt exalted ſtation, and who had paſſed through many changes of fortune. He was originally the ſon of an enfranchiſed ſlave, called Ælius, who only gave him ſo much learning as would qualify him for keeping a little ſhop in the city. He then became a ſchool-maſter; he afterwards ſtudied the law; and then became a ſoldier: In this laſt ſtation his behaviour was ſuch, as to raiſe him to the poſt of captain of a cohort againſt the Parthians. Being thus introduced to arms, he went through the uſual gradations of military

tary preferment in Britain, and Mæſia, until he became the commander of a legion under Aurelius. In this ſtation he performed ſuch excellent ſervices againſt the barbarians, that he was made conſul, and ſucceſſively governor of Dacia, Syria, and Aſia Minor. In the reign of Commodus he was baniſhed, but ſoon after recalled, and ſent into Britain to reform the abuſes of the army. In this employment his uſual good fortune attended him: he was oppoſed by a ſedition among the legions, and left for dead among many others who were ſlain. However, he ſurmounted this danger, ſeverely puniſhed the mutineers, and eſtabliſhed regularity and diſcipline among the troops he was ſent to command. From thence he was removed into Africa, where the ſedition of the ſoldiers had like to have been as fatal to him as in his former government. Removing from Africa, and fatigued with an active life, he betook himſelf to retirement: but Commodus, willing to keep him near Rome, made him præfect of the city; which employment he filled, when the conſpirators fixed upon him as the propereſt perſon to ſucceed to the empire.

His being advanced by Commodus only ſerved to increaſe his fears of falling as an object of his ſuſpicions; when, therefore, the conſpirators repaired to his houſe by night, he conſidered their arrival as a command from the

emperor for his death. Upon Lætus entering his apartment, Pertinax, without any ſhow of fear, cried out, That for many days he had expected to end his life in that manner, wondering that the emperor had deferred it ſo long. However, he was not a little ſurpriſed when informed of the real cauſe of their viſit; and being ſtrongly urged to accept of the empire, he at laſt complied with their offer.

Being carried to their camp, Pertinax was proclaimed emperor, and ſoon after the citizens and ſenate conſented; their joy at the election of their new ſovereign being ſcarce equal to that for the death of the tyrant. They then pronounced Commodus a parricide; an enemy to the gods, his country, and all mankind; and commanded that his corpſe ſhould rot upon a dunghill. In the mean time, they ſaluted Pertinax as emperor and Cæſar, with repeated acclamations, and chearfully took the oaths of obedience. The provinces ſoon after followed the example of Rome; ſo that he began his reign with univerſal ſatisfaction to the whole empire, in the ſixty-eighth year of his age.

Nothing could exceed the juſtice and wiſdom of this monarch's reign, the ſhort time it continued. He puniſhed all thoſe who had ſerved to corrupt the late emperor, and diſpoſed of his ill-got poſſeſſions to public uſes. He attempted to reſtrain the licentiouſneſs of the prætorian

bands, and put a ſtop to the injuries and inſolences they committed againſt the people. He ſold moſt of the buffoons and jeſters of Commodus as ſlaves; particularly ſuch as had obſcene names. He continually frequented the ſenate as often as it ſate, and never refuſed an audience even to the meaneſt of the people. His ſucceſs in foreign affairs was equal to his internal policy. When the barbarous nations abroad had certain intelligence that he was emperor, they immediately laid down their arms, well knowing the oppoſition they were to expect from ſo experienced a commander. His great error was avarice, which, in ſome meaſure, ſerved to haſten his ruin.

The prætorian ſoldiers, whoſe manners he had attempted to reform, having been long corrupted by the indulgence and profuſion of their former monarch, began to hate him, for the parſimony and diſcipline he had introduced among them. They therefore reſolved to dethrone him; and, for that purpoſe, declared Maternus, an ancient ſenator, emperor, and endeavoured to carry him to the camp to proclaim him. Maternus, however, was too juſt to the merits of Pertinax, and too faithful a ſubject, to concur in their ſeditious deſigns; wherefore eſcaping out of their hands, he fled, firſt to the emperor, and then out of the city. They then nominated one Falco, another ſenator,

whom

whom the ſenate would have ordered for execution, had not Pertinax interpoſed, who declared, That, during his reign, no ſenator ſhould ſuffer death.

The prætorian ſoldiers then reſolved unanimouſly not to uſe any ſecret conſpiracies, or private contrivances, but boldly to ſeiſe upon the emperor and empire at once. They accordingly, in a tumultuous manner, marched through the ſtreets of Rome, and entered the palace without oppoſition. Such was the terror of their approach, that the greateſt part of the emperor's attendants forſook him; while thoſe who remained, earneſtly entreated him to fly to the body of the people, and intereſt them in his defence. However, he rejected that advice, declaring, That it was unworthy his imperial dignity, and all his paſt actions, to ſave himſelf by flight. Having thus reſolved to face the rebels, he had ſome hopes that his preſence alone, would terrify and confound them. But what could his former virtues, or the dignity of command, avail againſt a tumultuous rabble, nurſed up in vice, and miniſters of former tyranny? One Thauſus, a Tungrian, ſtruck him with his lance on the breaſt, crying out, "The ſoldiers ſend you this." Pertinax finding his end approaching, covered his head with his robe, and ſunk down, mangled with a multitude of wounds, which he received from

various aſſaſſins. Electus, and ſome others of his attendants, who attempted to defend him, were alſo ſlain: his ſon and daughter only eſcaped, who happened to be lodged out of the palace. Thus, after a reign of three months, Pertinax fell a ſacrifice to the licentious fury of the prætorian army. From the number of his adventures, he was called the Tennis-ball of Fortune: and certainly no man ever experienced ſuch a variety of ſituations, with ſo blameleſs a character.

CHAP. XXI.

DIDIUS JULIAN, the Twentieth EMPEROR of ROME.

U.C.954. A.D.192. THE ſoldiers having committed this outrage, retired with great precipitation to their companions, and immediately fortified their camp, expecting to be attacked by the citizens. Two days having paſſed without any attempt of that kind, they became more inſolent; and willing to make uſe of the power of which they found themſelves poſſeſſed, they made proclamation, That they would ſell the empire to whoever would purchaſe it at the higheſt price. In conſequence of this proclamation, ſo odious and unjuſt

unjuſt in itſelf, only two bidders were found; namely, Sulpician and Didius. The former, a conſular perſon, præfect of the city, and ſon-in-law to the late emperor Pertinax. The latter, a conſular perſon likewiſe, a great lawyer, and the wealthieſt man in the city. He was ſitting with ſome friends at dinner when the proclamation was publiſhed; and being charmed with the proſpect of unbounded power, immediately roſe from the table, and haſtened to the camp. Sulpician was got there before him; but as he had rather promiſes, than treaſure, to beſtow, the offers of Didius, who produced immenſe ſums of ready money, prevailed. He was received into the camp by a ladder, and the ſoldiers inſtantly ſwore to obey him as emperor. From the camp he was attended by his new electors into the city; the whole body of his guards, which conſiſted of ten thouſand men, were ranged around him in ſuch order, as if they had rather prepared for battle, than a peaceable ceremony. The citizens, however, not only refuſed to confirm his election, but curſed him as he paſſed.

Upon being conducted to the ſenate-houſe, he addreſſed the few ſenators who were preſent in a very laconic ſpeech. "Fathers, you want "an emperor, and I am the fitteſt perſon you "can chooſe." But even this, ſhort as it ſeems, was unneceſſary, ſince the ſenate had it not in their power to refuſe their approbation. His

ſpeech being backed by the army, to whom he had given about a million of our money, ſucceeded. The choice of the ſoldiers was confirmed by the ſenate, and Didius was acknowledged emperor, now in the fifty-ſeventh year of his age.

It ſhould ſeem by this weak monarch's conduct, when ſeated on the throne, that he thought the government of an empire rather a pleaſure, than a toil. Inſtead of attempting to gain the hearts of his ſubjects, he gave himſelf up to eaſe and inactivity, utterly regardleſs of the duties of his ſtation. He was mild and gentle indeed, neither injuring any, nor expecting to be injured. But that avarice, by which he became opulent, ſtill followed him in his exaltation; ſo that the ſoldiers who elected him, ſoon began to deteſt him for thoſe qualities, ſo very oppoſite to a military character. The people alſo, againſt whoſe conſent he was choſen, were not leſs his enemies. Whenever he iſſued from his palace, they openly poured forth their imprecations againſt him, crying out, That he was a thief, and had ſtolen the empire. Didius, however, in the true ſpirit of a trader, patiently bore all their reproaches, ſometimes beckoning to them to approach him, and teſtifying his regard by every kind of ſubmiſſion.

While Didius was thus contemptuouſly treated at home, two valiant generals, in different

ferent parts of the empire, diſclaimed his authority, each boldly reſolving to contend for the throne, by the aſſiſtance of the troops they commanded. Theſe were Preſcennius Niger, governor of Syria; and Septimius Severus, commander of the German legions. Niger was beloved by the people for his clemency and valour: and the report of his propoſing Pertinax for his model, and reſolving to revenge his death, gained him univerſal eſteem among the people. Being thus appriſed of their inclinations, he eaſily induced his army in Syria to proclaim him emperor; and his title was, ſhortly after, acknowledged by all the kings and potentates in Aſia, who ſent their ambaſſadors to him as their lawful prince. The pleaſure of thus being treated as a monarch, in ſome meaſure retarded his endeavours to ſecure his title. Entirely ſatisfied with the homage of thoſe about him, he neglected the opportunities of ſuppreſſing his rivals, and gave himſelf up to feaſting and luxury at Antioch.

The conduct of Severus, an African by birth, was very different. Being proclaimed by his army, he began by promiſing to revenge the death of Pertinax, and took upon him his name. He next ſecured the fidelity of all the ſtrong places in his province, and then reſolved, with the utmoſt expedition, to march with his whole force directly to Rome.

In the mean time, Didius, who diſregarded the attempts of Niger, was greatly alarmed at thoſe of Severus. He firſt, with many ſolicitations, procured the ſenate to proclaim him a traitor. He then applied himſelf to make the neceſſary proviſions to oppoſe him, in which he found nothing but diſappointment. The cohorts that elected him, were enervated by vice and luxury; the people deteſted his cauſe; and the cities of Italy had long been diſuſed to the art of war. Some adviſed him to march forward, and meet Severus, as he was croſſing the Alps. Others were for ſending the generals upon that expedition. The unfortunate Didius, unequal to the taſk of empire, and quite confounded with the multiplicity of counſels, could take no other reſolution, but that of waiting his rival's coming at Rome. Accordingly being informed of his approach, he obtained the conſent of the ſenate to ſend him ambaſſadors, offering to make him a partner in the empire. But Severus rejected this offer, conſcious of his own ſtrength, and of the weakneſs of the propoſer.

The ſenate ſoon appeared of the ſame ſentiments, and, perceiving the timidity and weakneſs of their preſent maſter, began to abandon him, declaring, that he who could not defend the empire, was unworthy to govern it. Didius vainly endeavoured to reduce them to their duty, firſt by intreaties, and then by threats; but theſe only

ſerved

ſerved to haſten his deſtruction. The ſenate being called together, as was formerly practiſed in the times of the commonwealth, by the conſuls, they unanimouſly decreed, That Didius ſhould be deprived of the empire, and that Severus ſhould be proclaimed in his ſtead. They then commanded Didius to be ſlain, and ſent meſſengers for this purpoſe to the palace, where they found him diſarmed, and weeping among a few friends, who ſtill adhered to his intereſt. When the executioners began to prepare for their fatal errand, he expoſtulated with them, demanding what crime he had committed. He could not be perſuaded to think that paying his money, and receiving an empire in exchange, deſerved ſo ſevere a puniſhment. The executioners, however, were neither able, nor willing, to enter into the merits of the cauſe; they preſently led him into the ſecret baths of the palace, and obliging him to ſtretch his neck forward, after the manner of condemned criminals, ſtruck off his head, and placed it in thoſe courts where he had formerly pleaded with great ſucceſs.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS, the Twenty-firſt EMPEROR of ROME.

U.C.957. A.D.159. THE ſenate having thus diſpatched Didius, ſent ambaſſadors to Severus, yielding him obedience, granting him the enſigns and the uſual titles of empire, and informing him of the death of Didius. Severus, who was now about forty-ſeven years of age, received them with all proper reſpect, and entertaining them honourably, continued his march towards Rome. As he came near the city, his firſt exertion of power was, to have all the prætorian ſoldiers, who had lately ſold the empire, come forth, unarmed, to meet him. Theſe, though ſenſible of their danger, were obliged to comply, and accordingly came forward, with branches of laurel, as to welcome his approach. Severus, however, ſoon ſhowed how little their preſent ſubmiſſion could atone for their paſt offences: after upbraiding them, in a ſhort ſpeech, with all their crimes, he commanded them to be inſtantly ſtripped of their military habits, deprived of the name and honour of ſoldiers, and baniſhed an hundred miles from Rome. He then entered

entered the city in a military manner, took poſſeſſion of the palace, and promiſed the ſenate to conduct himſelf with clemency and juſtice. However, though he united great vigour with the moſt refined policy, yet his African cunning was conſidered as a particular defect in him. He is celebrated for his wit, learning, and prudence; but equally blamed for perfidy and cruelty. In ſhort, he ſeemed equally diſpoſed to the performance of the greateſt acts of virtue, and the moſt bloody ſeverities. He began his command, by ſeiſing all the children of ſuch as had employments or authority in the Eaſt, and detained them as pledges for the loyalty of their parents. He next ſupplied the city with corn, and then, with all poſſible expedition, marched againſt Niger, who was ſtill conſidered, and honoured, as emperor of the Eaſt.

One of the chief obſtacles to his march, was, the leaving behind him Clodius Albinus, commander of the legions in Britain, whom he by all means endeavoured to ſecure to his intereſts. For this end he endeavoured to prevail, by giving him hopes of ſucceeding to the empire; inſinuating, that himſelf was declining, and his children but infants. To deceive him ſtill further, he wrote in the ſame ſtyle to the ſenate, gave him the title of Cæſar, and ordered money

money to be coined with his image. Theſe artifices ſerving to lull Albinus into falſe ſecurity, Severus marched againſt Niger with all his forces. After ſome undeciſive conflicts, the laſt great battle that was fought between theſe two extraordinary men, was upon the plains of Iſſus, on the very ſpot where Alexander had formerly conquered Darius. The two great armies encountered upon the plain, and the neighbouring mountains were covered with infinite numbers of people, who were merely led by curioſity to become ſpectators of an engagement that was to determine the empire of the world. The fate of the battle was that which we have almoſt ever found between European and Aſiatick troops, of nearly equal numbers. Severus was conqueror: and Niger's head being ſtruck off by ſome ſoldiers of the conquering army, was inſultingly carried through the camp on the point of a lance.

This victory ſecured Severus the poſſeſſion of the throne. However, the Parthians, Perſians, and ſome other neighbouring nations, took up arms, under a pretence of vindicating Niger's cauſe. The emperor marched againſt them in perſon, had many engagements with them, and obtained ſuch ſignal victories, as enlarged the empire, and eſtabliſhed peace in the Eaſt.

Niger

Niger being no more, Severus now turned his views againſt Albinus, whom he reſolved by every means to deſtroy. For this purpoſe he ſent ſome aſſaſſins into Britain, under a pretence of bringing him letters, but in reality to diſpatch him. Albinus being appriſed of their deſigns, prevented their attempt by recurring to open force, and proclaiming himſelf emperor. Nor was he without a powerful army to ſupport his pretenſions; of which Severus being ſenſible, he bent his whole force to oppoſe him. From the Eaſt he continued his courſe acroſs the Straits of Byzantium, into the moſt weſtern parts of Europe, without intermiſſion. Equally regardleſs of the moſt parching heats, and the moſt rigorous colds, he led his ſoldiers bareheaded over mountains covered with ſnow. Albinus being informed of his approach, went over to meet him with his forces into Gaul; ſo that the campaign on both ſides was carried on with great vigour. Fortune ſeemed for ſome time variable; but at laſt a deciſive battle was fought, eſteemed one of the moſt deſperate recorded in the Roman hiſtory. It laſted from morning till night, without any ſeeming advantage on either ſide; at length, the troops of Severus began to fly; and he happening to fall from his horſe, the army of Albinus cried out victory. But the engagement was ſoon renewed with vigour by Lætus, one of Severus's commanders, who

who came up with a body of reſerve, deſigning to deſtroy both parties, and make himſelf emperor. This attempt, though deſigned againſt both, turned out entirely to the advantage of Severus. He therefore again charged with ſuch fury and execution, that he ſoon plucked the victory from thoſe who but a ſhort time before ſeemed conquerors; and purſuing them into the city of Lyons, took Albinus priſoner, and cut off his head; treating his dead body with inſults that could only flow from a mean and revengeful temper. All the ſenators who were ſlain in battle, he ordered to be quartered; and ſuch as were taken alive, were immediately executed.

Having thus, by means of his army, ſecured himſelf in poſſeſſion of the empire, upon his return to Rome, he loaded his ſoldiers with rewards and honours, giving them ſuch privileges as ſtrengthened his own power, while they deſtroyed that of the ſtate. For the ſoldiers, who had hitherto ſhowed the ſtrongeſt inclinations to an abuſe of power, were now made arbiters of the fate of emperors; and we ſhall henceforward behold them ſetting them up, and dethroning them at pleaſure.

Being thus ſecured of his army, he reſolved to give way to his natural turn for conqueſt, and to oppoſe his arms againſt the Parthians, who were then invading the frontiers of the empire. Having therefore previouſly given the govern-

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ment of domeſtick policy to one Plautian, a particular favourite, to whoſe daughter he married his ſon Caracalla, he ſet out for the Eaſt, and proſecuted the war with his uſual expedition and ſucceſs. He forced ſubmiſſion from the king of Armenia, deſtroyed ſeveral cities in Arabia Felix, landed on the Parthian coaſts, took and plundered the famous city Cteſiphon, marched back, through Paleſtine and Egypt, and at length returned to Rome in triumph.

During this interval, Plautian, who was left to direct the affairs of Rome, began to think of aſpiring to the empire himſelf. He had before been remarkably cruel to the Chriſtians, and now he reſolved to increaſe the number of his crimes by ingratitude and treaſon. Upon the emperor's return, he employed a tribune of the prætorian cohorts, of which he was the commander, to aſſaſſinate him; as likewiſe his ſon, Caracalla. The tribune ſeemed chearfully to undertake this dangerous office; but inſtead of putting it into execution, informed Severus of his favourite's treachery. The emperor at firſt received it as an improbable ſtory, and as the artifice of one who envied his favourite's fortune. However, he was at laſt perſuaded to permit the tribune to conduct Plautian to the emperor's apartments to be a teſtimony againſt himſelf. With this intent, the tribune went and amuſed him with a pretended account of his killing the

emperor and his ſon; deſiring him, if he thought fit to ſee them dead, to go with him to the palace. As Plautian ardently deſired their deaths, he readily gave credit to his relation, and following the tribune, was conducted, at midnight, into the innermoſt receſſes. But what muſt have been his diſappointment, when, inſtead of finding the emperor lying dead, as he expected, he beheld the room lighted up with torches, and Severus, ſurrounded by his friends, prepared to receive him in ſtate. Being aſked by the emperor, with a ſtern countenance, what had brought him there at that unſeaſonable time; he was, at firſt, utterly confounded, and, not knowing what excuſe to make, he ingenuouſly confeſſed the whole, intreating forgiveneſs for what he had intended. The emperor ſeemed, in the beginning, inclined to pardon; but Caracalla, his ſon, who, from the earlieſt age, ſhowed a diſpoſition to cruelty, ſpurned him away in the midſt of his ſupplications, and, with his ſword, ran him through the body.

Severus having eſcaped this danger, ſpent a conſiderable time in viſiting ſome cities in Italy, permitting none of his officers to ſell places of truſt or dignity, and diſtributing juſtice with the ſtricteſt impartiality. He took ſuch an exact order in the managing his treaſury, that notwithſtanding his great expences, he left more money behind him than any of his

predeceſſors. His armies alſo were kept upon the ſame reſpectable footing, ſo that he feared no invaſion. Being equally attentive to the preſervation of all parts of the empire, he reſolved to make an expedition into Britain, where the Romans were in danger of being deſtroyed, or compelled to abandon the province. Wherefore, after appointing his two ſons, Caracalla and Geta, joint ſucceſſors in the empire, and taking them with him, he landed in Britain, to the great terror of the northern inhabitants, who had harraſſed the Roman ſettlements. He left his ſon Geta in the ſouthern part of the province, which had continued in obedience, and marched, with his ſon Caracalla, againſt the Caledonians. In this expedition, his army ſuffered prodigious hardſhips in purſuing the enemy; they were obliged to hew their way through intricate foreſts, to drain extenſive marſhes, and form bridges over rapid rivers; ſo that he loſt fifty thouſand men by fatigue and ſickneſs. However, he ſurmounted all theſe inconveniences with unremitting ardour; and proſecuted his ſucceſſes with ſuch vigour, that he compelled the enemy to ſue for peace; which he granted upon their ſurrendering a conſiderable part of their country, together with all their arms and military preparations. Having thus given peace to Britain, for its better ſecurity he built that famous wall which ſtill goes

by his name, extending from Solway Frith, on the weſt, to the German ocean, on the eaſt. It was eight feet broad, and twelve feet high, planted with towers, at a mile diſtance from each other, and communicating by pipes of braſs in the wall, which conveyed inſtructions from one garriſon to another, with incredible diſpatch. Severus having thus humbled his enemies, retired to York; where, partly through age and fatigue, and partly through grief for the irreclaimable life of Caracalla, he found himſelf daily declining. To add to the diſtreſs of his ſituation, he was informed, that the ſoldiers had revolted, and declared his ſon emperor. In this exigence, he ſeemed once more to recall his natural vigour; he got himſelf immediately into his litter, and commanded the new emperor, with the tribunes and centurions, to be brought before him. Though all were willing to court the favor of the young emperor, ſuch was the authority of Severus, that none dared to diſobey. They appeared before him confounded and trembling, and implored pardon upon their knees. Upon which, putting his hand to his head, he cried out, "Know, that it is the head that governs, "and not the feet." However, ſoon perceiving his diſorder to increaſe, and knowing that he could not outlive it, he could not help obſerving in his agony, That though he had been

been all that man could be, it was of no ſervice to him at that painful hour. Then ordering his urn to be brought, wherein his aſhes were to be incloſed. "Little urn (ſaid he) "thou ſhalt now contain what the world could "not contain." Then addreſſing his friends that ſtood near him, "When I took the empire "upon me (ſaid he) I found it declining, "and exhauſted: I now leave it ſtrong and "laſting to my ſons, if they prove virtuous; "but feeble and deſperate if otherwiſe." His pains now increaſing, eſpecially in his feet, he called for poiſon; which being refuſed him, he loaded his ſtomach with food, which not being able to digeſt, it ſoon brought him to his end, in the ſixty-ſixth year of his age, after an active, though cruel reign, of about eighteen years.

CHAP. XXIII.

CARACALLA and GETA, the Twenty-ſecond EMPERORS of ROME.

CARACALLA and GETA being acknowledged as emperors by the army, began to ſhow a mutual hatred to each other, even before their arrival at Rome. Their only agreement was in reſolving to deify Severus, their father; U.C.694. A.D.211.

but ſoon after, each ſought to attach the ſenate and army to his own particular intereſt. They were of very oppoſite diſpoſitions: Caracalla was fierce and cruel to an extreme degree; Geta was mild and merciful; ſo that the city ſoon found the dangerous effects of being governed by two princes of equal power and contrary inclinations.

But this oppoſition was of no long continuance; for Caracalla, being reſolved to govern alone, furiouſly entered Geta's apartment, and, followed by ruffians, ſlew him in his mother's arms. Having committed this deteſtable murder, he iſſued, with great haſte, from the palace, crying out, That his brother would have ſlain him; and that he was obliged, in ſelf-defence, to retaliate the intended injury. He then took refuge among the prætorian cohorts, and, in a pathetic tone, began to implore their aſſiſtance, ſtill making the ſame excuſe for his conduct. To this he added a much more prevailing argument, promiſing to beſtow upon them, the largeſſes uſually given upon the election of new emperors, and diſtributing among them almoſt all the treaſures which had been amaſſed by his father. By ſuch perſuaſives, the ſoldiers did not heſitate to proclaim him ſole emperor, and to ſtigmatize the memory of his brother Geta as a traitor, and an enemy to the commonwealth. The ſenators were,

ſoon

ſoon after, induced, either through favour or fear, to approve what had been done by the army; Caracalla began to reign alone, wept for the death of his brother, whom he had ſlain; and, to carry his hypocriſy to the utmoſt extreme, ordered him to be adored as a god.

Being now emperor, he went on to mark his courſe with blood. Whatever was done by Domitian, or Nero, fell ſhort of this monſter's barbarities. Lætus, who firſt adviſed him to murder his brother, was the firſt who fell a ſacrifice to his jealouſy. His own wife, Plautina, followed. Papinian, the renowned civilian, was beheaded for refuſing to write in vindication of his cruelty; anſwering the emperor's requeſt, by obſerving, That it was much eaſier to commit a parricide, than to defend it. He commanded all governours to be ſlain, that his brother had appointed, and deſtroyed not leſs than two thouſand perſons who had adhered to his party. Whole nights were ſpent in the execution of his bloody decrees; and the dead bodies of people, of all ranks, were carried out of the city in carts, where they were burnt in heaps, without any of the ceremonies of a funeral. Upon a certain occaſion, he ordered his ſoldiers to ſet upon a crouded audience in the theatre, only for diſcountenancing a charioteer, whom he happened to favour. Perceiving himſelf hated by the people, he pub-

lickly ſaid, That he could inſure his own ſafety, though not their love; ſo that he neither valued their reproaches, nor feared their hatred.

This ſafety, which he ſo much built upon, was placed in the protection of his ſoldiers. He had exhauſted the treaſury, drained the provinces, and committed a thouſand acts of rapacity, merely to keep them ſtedfaſt in his intereſts; and being diſpoſed to truſt himſelf with them particularly, he reſolved to lead them upon a viſit through all the provinces of the empire. He firſt went into Germany, where, to oblige the natives, he dreſſed himſelf in the habit of the country. From thence, he travelled into Macedonia, where he pretended to be a great admirer of Alexander the Great; and among other extravagancies, cauſed a ſtatue of that monarch to be made with two faces; one of which reſembled Alexander, and the other himſelf. He was ſo corrupted by flattery, that he called himſelf Alexander; walked, as he was told that monarch had walked, and, like him, bent his head to one ſhoulder. Shortly after, arriving at Leſſer Aſia, and the ruins of Troy, as he was viewing the tomb of Achilles, he took it into his head to reſemble that hero: and one of his freedmen happening to die at that time, he uſed the ſame ceremonies that were performed at the tomb of Patroclus. Paſſing from thence into Egypt, he cut off numbers at once,

in the amphitheatre at Alexandria, only for having paſſed ſome jeſts upon his perſon and vices. The ſlaughter was ſo great, that the ſtreams of blood, flowing down, diſcoloured the mouth of the river Nile.

Going from thence into Syria, he invited Artabanus, king of Parthia, to a conference, deſiring his daughter in marriage, and promiſing him the moſt honourable protection. In conſequence of this, that king met him on a ſpacious plain, unarmed, and only attended with a vaſt concourſe of his nobles. This was what Caracalla deſired. Regardleſs of his promiſe, or the law of nations, he inſtantly ſurrounded him with armed troops, let in wild beaſts among his attendants, and made a moſt terrible ſlaughter among them, Artabanus himſelf eſcaping with the utmoſt difficulty. For this vile treachery, he obtained from the ſenate the ſurname of Parthicus.

Upon his return towards Rome, it would ſeem as if his vices were inexhauſtible; for, having been guilty of fratricide, he now reſolved to marry the mother of Geta, whom he had ſlain. It happened that one day, ſeeing her drop her veil, which diſcloſed her naked boſom, that was extremely beautiful, he told her, That he would poſſeſs thoſe charms he beheld, if it were lawful. To this unnatural requeſt, ſhe heſitated not to anſwer That he

might enjoy all things, who poſſeſſed all. Whereupon, ſetting aſide all duty and reſpect for his deceaſed father, he celebrated his nuptials with her in public, totally diſregarding the cenſures and the ſarcaſms of mankind.

However, though he diſregarded ſhame, he was not inſenſible of fear. He was ever uneaſy, in the conſciouſneſs of being univerſally hated: and was continually conſulting aſtrologers concerning what death he ſhould die. Among others, he ſent one of his confidants, named Maternianus, with orders to conſult all the aſtrologers in the city concerning his end. Maternianus conſidered this as a proper time to get rid of Macrinus, the emperor's principal commander in Meſopotamia, a man who was daily ſupplanting him in his maſter's favour. He, therefore, informed him by letter, as if from the aſtrologers, that Macrinus had a deſign againſt his life; and they conſequently adviſed him to put the conſpirator to death. This letter was ſent ſealed, and made up, amongſt many others, to be conveyed with the greater ſecrecy, and delivered to the emperor, as he was preparing for a chariot race. However, as it never was his cuſtom to interrupt his pleaſures for his buſineſs, he gave the pacquet to Macrinus to peruſe; and to inform him of the contents, when more at leiſure. In peruſing theſe letters, when Macrinus came

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to that which regarded himſelf, he was unable to contain his ſurpriſe and terror. His firſt care was, to reſerve the letter in queſtion to himſelf, and to acquaint the emperor only with the ſubſtance of the reſt. He then ſet about the moſt probable means of compaſſing his death, by which alone he could expect any ſafety. At length he determined to apply to one Martial, a man of great ſtrength, and a centurion of the guards, who hated the emperor from various motives, particularly for the death of a brother, whom Caracalla had ordered to be ſlain. Him, therefore, Macrinus, exhorted to revenge his brother's death, by killing the tyrant, which he might eaſily effect, as being always ſo near his perſon. Martial readily undertook the dangerous taſk, being willing to meet death himſelf, ſo he might obtain his deſire of ſeeing the tyrant expire before him. Accordingly, as the emperor was riding out one day, near a little city called Carræ, he happened to withdraw himſelf privately, upon a natural occaſion, with only one page to hold his horſe. This was the opportunity Martial had ſo long and ardently deſired; wherefore, running to him haſtily, as if he had been called, he ſtabbed the emperor in the back, ſo that he died immediately. Having performed this hardy attempt, Martial, unconcernedly, returned to his troop; but retiring, by inſenſible degrees,

degrees, he endeavoured to ſecure himſelf by flight. But his companions ſoon miſſing him, and the page giving information of what had been done, he was purſued by the German horſe, and cut in pieces.

During the reign of this execrable tyrant, which continued ſix years, the empire was every day declining; the ſoldiers were entirely maſters of every election; and as there were various armies in different parts, ſo there were as many intereſts, all oppoſite to each other. Caracalla, by ſatisfying their moſt unreaſonable appetites, deſtroyed all diſcipline among them, and all ſubordination in the ſtate. However, the conſtitution of Rome at preſent pretty much reſembled that of ancient Rome; kings or governors were choſen at both times by the people; but in ancient Rome, thoſe people were but occaſionally ſoldiers; in the latter empire, they were ſoldiers by profeſſion.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

OPPILLIUS MACRINUS, the Twenty-third EMPEROR of ROME.

THE ſoldiers, now without an emperor, after a ſuſpenſe of two days, fixed upon Macrinus, who took all poſſible methods to conceal his being privy to Caracalla's murder. The ſenate confirmed their choice ſhortly after; and likewiſe that of his ſon Diadumenus whom he took as a partner in the empire. Macrinus was fifty three years old when he entered upon the government of the empire. He was of obſcure parentage; ſome ſay, by birth a Moor, who by the mere rotation of office, being made firſt præfect of the prætorian bands, was now, by treaſon and accident, called to fill the throne. We are told but little of this emperor, except his engaging in a bloody though undecided battle, with Artabanus, king of Parthia, who came to take vengeance for the injury he had ſuſtained in the late reign; however, this monarch, finding his real enemy dead, was content to make peace, and returned into Parthia. Something is alſo ſaid of the ſeverity of U.C. 970. A.D. 217.

of this emperor's diſcipline: for to ſuch a pitch of licentiouſneſs was the Roman army now arrived, that the moſt ſevere puniſhments were unable to reſtrain the ſoldiers; and yet the moſt gentle inflictions were looked upon as ſeverity. It was this rigorous diſcipline, together with the artifices of Mœſa, grand-mother to Heliogabalus, the natural ſon of Caracalla, that cauſed the emperor's ruin. Heliogabalus was prieſt of a temple dedicated to the Sun, in Emeſa, a city of Phœnicia, and though but fourteen years old was greatly loved by the army, for the beauty of his perſon, and the memory of his father whom they ſtill conſidered as their greateſt benefactor. This was ſoon perceived by the grandmother, who, being very rich in gold and jewels, gave liberal preſents among them, while they frequently repaired to her temple, both from the garriſon in the city, and the camp of Macrinus. This intercourſe growing every day more frequent, and the ſoldiers being diſguſted with the ſeverities of their preſent emperor Macrinus, they began to think of placing Heliogabalus in his ſtead. Accordingly, ſending for him to their camp, he was immediately proclaimed; and ſuch were the hopes of his virtues, that all men began to eſpouſe his intereſts.

Macrinus, who at this time was purſuing his pleaſures at Antioch, gave but little attention

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to the firſt report, only ſending his lieutenant Julian, with ſome legions, to quell the inſurrection. However, theſe, like the reſt, ſoon declared for Heliogabalus, and ſlew their general. It was then that Macrinus found he had treated the rebellion too ſlightly; he therefore reſolved, with his ſon, to march directly againſt the ſeditious legions, and force them to their duty. Both parties met on the confines of Syria; the battle was for ſome time furious and obſtinate; but at laſt, Macrinus was overthrown, and obliged to ſeek ſafety by flight. His principal aim was to get to Rome, where he knew his preſence was deſired; wherefore, he travelled through the provinces of Aſia Minor, with the utmoſt expedition and privacy, but unfortunately fell ſick at the city of Chalcedon. There, thoſe who were ſent in purſuit, overtook, and put him to death, together with his ſon Diadumenus, after a ſhort reign of one year and two months.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

HELIOGABALUS, the Twenty-fourth EMPEROR of ROME.

U.C.971. A.D.218. THE ſenate and citizens of Rome being obliged to ſubmit to the appointment of the army, as uſual, Heliogabalus aſcended the throne at the age of fourteen. One at ſo early an age inveſted with unlimited power, and ſurrounded with flatterers, could be expected to act only as theſe thought proper to direct. This young emperor was entirely led by them; and being ſenſible that it was in his power to indulge all his appetites, he ſtudied only their gratification. As he is deſcribed by hiſtorians, he appears a monſter of ſenſuality. But little better could be expected from an emperor of fourteen, let looſe from every reſtraint. His ſhort life, therefore, is but a tiſſue of effeminacy, luſt, and extravagance. He married, in the ſmall ſpace of four years, ſix wives, and divorced them all. This was not the worſt; he took upon himſelf the quality of a woman, and married one of his officers; after that, he took for huſband, one Hierocles, a ſlave, whom he ſuffered to beat him ſeverely when he was guilty of any exceſs,

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all which he endured with great patience, ſaying, that a wife was obliged to ſubmit to her huſband. He built a temple to the Sun, and, deſirous that his god ſhould have a wife as well as himſelf, he married him to Pallas, and, ſhortly after to the Moon. His palace was a place of rendezvous for all the proſtitutes of Rome, whom he frequently met naked, calling them his fellow-ſoldiers, and companions in the field. He was ſo fond of the ſex, that he carried his mother with him to the ſenate-houſe, and demanded that ſhe ſhould always be preſent when matters of importance were debated. He even went ſo far as to build a ſenate-houſe for women, with ſuitable orders, habits, and diſtinctions, of which his mother was made preſident. They met ſeveral times; all their debates turning upon the faſhions of the day, and the different formalities to be uſed at giving and receiving viſits. To theſe follies he added great cruelty and boundleſs prodigality; ſo that he was heard to ſay, that ſuch diſhes as were cheaply obtained, were ſcarce worth eating. His ſuppers, therefore, generally coſt ſix thouſand crowns, and often ſixty thouſand. He always dreſſed in cloth of gold and purple, enriched with precious ſtones, and never wore the ſame habit twice. His palace, his chambers, and his beds, were all furniſhed with the richeſt ſtuffs, covered with gold and jewels. Whenever he took

took horſe, all the way between his apartment and the place of mounting, was covered with gold and ſilver duſt ſtrewn at his approach. In ſhort, all his government, actions, dreſs, and furniture, teſtified the extravagant folly of a vicious boy. Thus he was ſeen at one time driving elephants yoked to his chariot; at another, maſtiff dogs: at one time he was drawn by lions; at another, by four naked women. He was ſo extravagantly whimſical, that he cauſed a collection to be made of ten thouſand pounds weight of ſpiders, to be a teſtimony of the magnitude of the city. He would invite gueſts to ſupper in the ſame ſpirit of abſurdity; thus he gave a feaſt to eight old men, eight bald men, eight blind men of one eye, eight lame with the gout, eight deaf men, eight blacks, and eight ſo fat that they could ſcarce ſit at the ſame table. Theſe were the tricks of a child, and might paſs for harmleſs follies, had he not united malevolence with every entertainment. He was often ſeen to ſmother his gueſts in rooms filled with roſes, and terrify them by letting looſe wild beaſts among them, previouſly deprived of their teeth and claws. It is even ſaid, he ſtrove to foretel what was to happen, by inſpecting the entrails of young men ſacrificed; and that he choſe the moſt beautiful youths throughout Italy, to be ſlain for that horrid purpoſe.

Theſe

Theſe exceſſes were ſoon perceived by his grand-mother Mœſa, whoſe intrigues had firſt raiſed him to the throne, ſo that ſhe contrived to leſſen his power by dividing it. For this purpoſe, under a pretence of freeing him from the cares of public buſineſs, ſhe perſuaded him to adopt his couſin-german, Alexander, as his ſucceſſor; and likewiſe to make him his partner in the conſulſhip. Heliogabalus, having thus raiſed his couſin, had ſcarce given him his power, when he wiſhed again to take it away; but the virtues of this young prince had ſo greatly endeared the people and the army to him, that the attempt had like to have proved fatal to the tyrant. The prætorian ſoldiers mutinying, attempted to kill him, as he was walking in his gardens, but he eſcaped, by hiding himſelf, from their fury. However, upon returning to their camp, they continued the ſedition, requiring that the emperor ſhould remove ſuch perſons from about him, as oppreſſed the ſubject, and contributed to contaminate him. They required alſo the being permitted to guard the young prince themſelves; and that none of the emperor's favourites or familiars ſhould ever be permitted to converſe with him. Heliogabalus was reluctantly obliged to comply; and conſcious of the danger he was in, made preparations for death, when it ſhould arrive, in a manner truly whimſical and peculiar. He built

a lofty tower, with ſteps of gold and pearl, from whence to throw himſelf headlong in caſe of neceſſity. He alſo prepared cords of purple ſilk and gold to ſtrangle himſelf with; he provided golden ſwords and daggers to ſtab himſelf with; and poiſon to be kept in boxes of emerald, in order to obtain what death he choſe beſt. Thus fearing all things, but particularly ſuſpicious of the deſigns of the ſenate, he baniſhed them all out of the city; he next attempted to poiſon Alexander, and ſpread a report of his death; but perceiving the ſoldiers begin to mutiny, he immediately took him in his chariot to the camp, where he only experienced a freſh mortification, by finding all the acclamations, of the army directed to his ſucceſſor.

This not a little raiſed his indignation, and excited his deſire of revenge. He returned towards the city threatening the moſt ſevere puniſhments againſt thoſe who had diſpleaſed him, and meditating freſh cruelties. However, the ſoldiers were unwilling to give him time to put his deſigns in execution; they followed him directly to his palace, purſued him from apartment to apartment, till at laſt he was found concealed in a privy; a ſituation very different from that in which he expected to die. Having dragged him from thence through the ſtreets, with the moſt bitter invectives, and having diſpatched him, they attempted once more to ſqueeze his

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pampered body into a privy; but not eaſily effecting this they threw it into the Tyber, with heavy weights, that none might afterwards find or give it burial. This was the miſerable and ignominious death of Heliogabalus, in the eighteenth year of his age, after a deteſtable reign of four years. His mother was alſo ſlain at the ſame time by the ſoldiers; as well as many of the opprobrious aſſociates of his criminal pleaſures; having ſtakes driven up their bodies, that their deaths might be conformable to their lives.

CHAP. XXVI.

ALEXANDER, the Twenty-fifth EMPEROR of ROME.

ALEXANDER being without oppoſition declared emperor, the ſenate, with their uſual adulation, were for conferring new titles upon him; but he modeſtly declined them all, alledging, that titles were only then honourable when given to virtue, not to ſtation. This outſet was an happy omen of his future virtues; and few princes in hiſtory have been more commended by his contemporaries, or indeed more deſerved commendation. To the moſt rigid juſtice he added the greateſt humanity. He loved the good, and was a ſevere reprover of U.C. 975. A.D. 222.

the lewd and infamous. His accompliſhments were equal to his virtues. He was an excellent mathematician, geometrician, and muſician, he was equally ſkilful in painting and ſculpture; and in poetry, few of his time could equal him. In ſhort, ſuch were his talents, and ſuch the ſolidity of his judgment, that though but ſixteen years of age, he was conſidered as a wiſe old man.

The firſt part of his reign was ſpent in a reformation of the abuſes of his predeceſſor. He reſtored the ſenators to their rank; nothing being undertaken without the moſt ſage adviſers, and moſt mature deliberation. Among the number of his adviſers, was his mother Mammæa, a woman eminent for her virtues and accompliſhments, and who made uſe of her power as well to ſecure her ſon the affections of his ſubjects, as to procure them the moſt juſt adminiſtration. Among his miniſters of ſtate, the principal were, Ulpian, the celebrated lawyer; and Sabinus, the ſenator, who was called the Cato of his time. Merit only was the paſſport to his protection; he would never permit offices or places to be purchaſed for money; it being a frequent maxim with him, that he who bought an office, muſt conſequently be a ſeller of juſtice. "I cannot (he would ſay) bear "to ſee merchants in authority; if I firſt allow "them to be ſuch, I cannot after condemn their "con-

" conduct: for how could I puniſh the perſon " who ſold, when I permitted him to be a " buyer?" He was therefore a rigid puniſher of ſuch magiſtrates as took bribes, ſaying, That it was not enough to deprive ſuch of their places; for their truſts being great, their lives, in moſt caſes ought to pay for a breach of them. On the contrary, he thought he could never ſufficiently reward ſuch as had been remarkable for their juſtice and integrity, keeping a regiſter of their names, and ſometimes aſking ſuch of them as appeared modeſt and unwilling to approach him, why they were ſo backward in demanding their reward; and why they ſuffered him to be in their debt. In ſhort he was obſerved every day to have done ſome good; in which he had the advantage of Titus, by having a longer reign. His clemency extended even to the Chriſtians who had been puniſhed in the former reign with unrelenting barbarity. Upon a conteſt between them and a company of cooks and vintners, about a piece of public ground, which the one claimed as a place for public worſhip, and the other for exerciſing their reſpective trades, he decided the point by his reſcript, in theſe words: " It is " better that God be worſhipped there in any " manner, than that the place ſhould be put to " uſes of drunkenneſs or debauchery."

His abilities in war were not inferior to his aſſiduity in peace. The empire, which, from the remiſſneſs and debauchery of the preceding reigns, now began to be attacked on every ſide, wanted a perſon of vigour and conduct to defend it. Alexander faced the enemy whereever the invaſion was moſt formidable, and, for a ſhort time, deferred its ruin. His firſt expedition, in the tenth year of his reign, was againſt the Parthians and Perſians, whom he oppoſed with a powerful army. His regularity and diſcipline were things almoſt unknown among the debauched ſoldiery; his camp reſembled a well regulated city, his ſoldiers were well clothed and armed, and his cavalry properly mounted; ſo that his army now gave an idea of Rome in its ſplendour. His manner of living was like that of the meaneſt ſentinel; whenever he dined, or ſupped, he ſate with his tent open, that all men might be witneſſes of the frugality of his table. Succeſs againſt the enemy was the reward of ſo much military virtue. The Perſians were routed in a deciſive engagement with great ſlaughter; the cities of Cteſiphon and Babylon were once more taken, and the Roman empire reſtored to its former limits. Upon his return to Antioch, his mother Mammæa, ſent for the famous Origen to be inſtructed by him in the principles of Chriſtianity; and after diſcourſing with him for

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ſome time upon the ſubject, diſmiſſed him with a proper ſafeguard to his native city of Alexandria. About the ſame time that Alexander was victorious in the Eaſt, Furius Celſus, his general, obtained a ſignal victory over the Mauritanians, in Africa; Varius Macrinus was ſucceſsful in Germany, and Junius Palmatus returned with conqueſt from Armenia. However the number of theſe victories only haſtened the decline of the empire, which was waſted by the exertion of its own ſtrength, and was now becoming little more than a ſplendid ruin.

About the thirteenth year of his reign, the Upper-Germans and other northern nations, began to pour down immenſe ſwarms of people upon the more ſouthern parts of the empire. They paſſed the Rhine and the Danube with ſuch fury, that all Italy was thrown into the moſt extreme conſternation. The emperor, ever ready to expoſe his perſon, for the ſafety of his people, made what levies he could, and went in perſon to ſtem the torrent, which he ſpeedily effected. It was in the courſe of his ſucceſſes againſt the enemy, that he was cut off by a mutiny among his own ſoldiers. The legions encamped about Moguntia, having been abominably corrupted, during the reign of Heliogabalus, and trained up in all kinds of rapine and diſobedience, required the moſt ſtrict command. Alexander could neither endure their

tumultuary obedience, nor they his regular diſcipline. His own faults, and thoſe of his mother Mammæa, were objected againſt him. They openly exclaimed, That they were governed by an avaricious woman, and a mean-ſpirited boy, and reſolved upon electing an emperor, capable of ruling alone. In this general revolt, Maximin, an old and experienced commander, held frequent conferences with the ſoldiers, and enflamed the ſedition. At length, being determined to diſpatch their preſent emperor, they ſent an executioner into his tent, who immediately ſtruck off his head; and, ſhortly after, that of his mother. He died in the twenty-ninth year of his age, after a proſperous reign of thirteen years and nine days; his death proving, that neither virtue nor juſtice can guard us againſt the misfortunes of this life; and that good men are to expect their reward in a place of more equitable diſtribution.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVII.

MAXIMIN, the Twenty-ſixth EMPEROR of ROME.

THE tumults occaſioned by the death of Alexander, being appeaſed, Maximin, who had been the chief promoter of the ſedition, was choſen emperor. This extraordinary man, whoſe character deſerves particular attention, was born of very obſcure parentage, being the ſon of a poor herdſman of Thrace. In the beginning, he followed his father's humble profeſſion, and only exerciſed his perſonal courage againſt the robbers who infeſted that part of the country in which he lived. Soon after, his ambition increaſing, he left his poor employment, and enliſted in the Roman army, where he ſoon became remarkable for his great ſtrength, diſcipline, and courage. This gigantick man was no leſs than eight feet and an half high; he had a body and ſtrength correſponding to his ſize, being not more remarkable for the magnitude, than the ſymmetry of his perſon. His wife's bracelet uſually ſerved him for a thumb ring; and his ſtrength was ſo great, that he was able to draw a carriage which two oxen could not move. He could ſtrike U.C.988. A.D.235.

ſtrike out a horſe's teeth, with a blow of his fiſt; and break its thigh with a kick. His diet was as extraordinary as the reſt of his endowments: he generally eat forty pounds weight of fleſh every day, and drank ſix gallons of wine, without committing any debauch in either. With a frame ſo athletick, he was poſſeſſed of a mind undaunted in danger, and neither fearing nor regarding any man. The firſt time he was made known was to the emperor Severus, who was then celebrating games on the birth-day of his ſon Geta. Maximin was at that time a rude countryman, and requeſted the emperor to be permitted to contend for the prizes which were diſtributed to the beſt runners, wreſtlers, and boxers of the army. Severus, unwilling to infringe the military diſcipline, would not permit him at firſt, as he was a Thracian peaſant, to combat, except with ſlaves, againſt whom his ſtrength appeared aſtoniſhing. He overcame ſixteen in running, one after the other: he then kept up with the emperor on horſeback: and having fatigued him in the courſe, he was oppoſed to ſeven of the moſt active ſoldiers, and overcame them with the greateſt eaſe.

From that time he was particularly noticed, and taken into the emperor's body guard, in which his aſſiduity and prompt obedience were particularly remarkable. In the reign of Caracalla,

calla, he was made a centurion, and diſtinguiſhed himſelf, in that ſtation, by his ſtrict attention to the morals and diſcipline of thoſe he commanded. When made a tribune, he ſtill retained the hardy ſimplicity of his life; eat as the meaneſt ſentinel; ſpent whole days in exerciſing the troops; and would ſometimes wreſtle with eight or ten of the ſtrongeſt men in the army, whom he threw with ſcarce any effort. Being thus become one of the moſt remarkable men in the empire, for courage, diſcipline, and perſonal activity, he gave ſhortly after a very high inſtance of his unſhaken fidelity: for when Macrinus was made emperor, he refuſed to ſerve under a prince who had betrayed his ſovereign, and retired to Thrace, his native country, where he followed commerce, and purchaſed ſome lands, content with privacy rather than a guilty dependence. Upon the acceſſion of Heliogabalus to the throne, this bold veteran once more returned to the army, but was, in the very beginning, diſguſted at the baſe effeminacy of the emperor; who, hearing amazing inſtances of his ſtrength, aſked him, if he were equally capable in combats of another nature. This lewd demand was ſo little ſuitable to the temper of Maximin, that he inſtantly left the court. Upon the death of Heliogabalus, he again returned to Rome, and was received with great kindneſs by Alexander, who

who particularly recommended him to the ſenate, and made him commander of the fourth legion, which conſiſted of new-raiſed ſoldiers. Maximin gladly accepted of this charge, and performed his duty with great exactneſs and ſucceſs, ſetting an example of virtue and diſcipline to all the commanders of the army. Nor was his valour leſs apparent againſt the Germans, whither he was ſent with his legion; ſo that he was unanimouſly conſidered as the boldeſt, braveſt, moſt valiant and moſt virtuous ſoldier in the whole empire. He ſoon, however, forfeited all theſe juſtly merited titles when he was raiſed to the throne; and, from being the moſt loved commander in the army, he became the moſt cruel tyrant upon earth. This change in his diſpoſition may readily ſerve to ſhow how dangerous a thing is power, that could transform a perſon with ſo many rigid virtues into ſuch a monſter of iniquity. Yet, in fact, his former virtues were all of the ſevere and rigid kind; which, without any education might very eaſily degenerate into tyranny; ſo that he might have miſtaken his ſucceeding cruelty for diſcipline, and his ſeverity for juſtice. However this be, Maximin is conſidered as one of the greateſt monſters of cruelty that ever diſgraced power; and, fearful of nothing himſelf, he ſeemed to ſport with the terrors of all mankind.

Maximin,

Maximin, ſeeing himſelf advanced to ſo high a ſtation as the empire, began immediately by endeavouring to force obedience from every rank of people, and by vindicating his authority by violence. The ſenate and people of Rome were the firſt that incurred his reſentment. They utterly refuſing to confirm the election of the army; he was the firſt emperor who reigned without their concurrence or approbation. However, he ſeemed regardleſs of their oppoſition, proceeding to ſecure his election by putting all ſuch to death as had been raiſed by his predeceſſor. The Chriſtians alſo, having found favour in the former reign, felt the weight of his reſentment, and were perſecuted in ſeveral parts of the empire, particularly in thoſe where he himſelf reſided. His cruelty likewiſe extended to the rich, whoſe lives and eſtates became a frequent ſacrifice to avarice and ſuſpicion. But what appears a ſtill more extraordinary inſtance of his cruelty, being aſhamed of the meanneſs of his extraction, he commanded all ſuch as were beſt acquainted with him and his parentage to be ſlain, although there were ſome amongſt the number, who had relieved him in his low condition.

However, his cruelties did not retard his military operations, which were carried on with a ſpirit becoming a better monarch. He overthrew the Germans in ſeveral battles, waſted all

all their country with fire and ſword for four hundred miles together, and formed a reſolution of ſubduing all the northern nations as far as the ocean. In theſe expeditions, in order to attach the ſoldiers more firmly to him, he increaſed their pay; and in every duty of the camp, he himſelf took as much pains as the meaneſt ſentinel in his army, ſhowing incredible courage and aſſiduity. In every engagement, wherever the conflict was hotteſt, Maximin was always ſeen fighting there in perſon, and deſtroying all before him: for, being bred a barbarian, he conſidered it as his duty to combat as a common ſoldier, while he commanded as a general.

In the mean time, his cruelties had ſo alienated the minds of his ſubjects, that ſeveral conſpiracies were ſecretly aimed againſt him. Magnus, a conſular perſon, and ſome others, had plotted to break down a wooden bridge, as ſoon as the emperor had paſſed it, and thus to abandon him to the enemy. But this being diſcovered, gave Maximin an opportunity of indulging his natural ſeverity; upon this pretext alone, cauſing above four thouſand to be ſlain. Shortly after, ſome of Alexander's old ſoldiers withdrawing themſelves from the camp, proclaimed one Quarcianus as emperor, who had been lately diſguſted at Maximin, for being diſmiſſed from employment. The

ſoldiers,

ſoldiers, in fact, conſtrained him to accept of the dangerous ſuperiority to which he was expoſed; and ſhortly after, in the ſpirit of the times, the perſon who had been the promoter of his advancement, murthered him in his bed, and carried his head to Maximin, who received him kindly at firſt, but ſoon put him to a cruel death, for his complicated guilt of treaſon and treachery.

Theſe partial inſurrections were ſoon after followed by a ſpirit of general diſcontent throughout all the empire. The provinces of Africa were the firſt that ſhowed their deteſtation of the tyrant, whoſe extortions and cruelties among them were become inſupportable. They firſt ſlew his procurator, and afterwards conſidering how dangerous a crime they had committed, they reſolved to throw off all expectations of pardon, and create a new emperor. Gordian was then pro-conſul of Africa, a perſon of great fame for his virtues, and greatly reverenced for a blameleſs life of near eighty years. Him therefore they determined to elect, and accordingly the ſoldiers and natives aſſembling together, tumultuouſly entering his houſe, reſolved to put their deſign in execution. Gordian, who, at firſt, ſuppoſed they were come to kill him, being made ſenſible of their intentions, utterly refuſed their offer, alledging his extreme age, and Maximin's power. But all

his oppoſition was vain; they conſtrained him to accept of the proffered dignity, and he, with his ſon Gordian, who was forty-ſix years of age, were declared emperors. Being thus raiſed, contrary to his inclinations, the old man immediately wrote to the ſenate, declaring that he had unwillingly accepted of the empire, and would only keep his authority till he had freed it from the tyranny of its preſent oppreſſor. The ſenate very joyfully confirmed his election, adjudging Maximin as an enemy and traitor to the ſtate. The citizens alſo ſhowed an equal zeal in the cauſe; they flew upon ſuch as were the reputed friends of Maximin, and tore them in pieces; even ſome who were innocent, falling a ſacrifice to the multitude's blind rage. So great an alteration being made in the city againſt the intereſt of Maximin, the ſenate were reſolved to drive their oppoſition to the extreme, and accordingly made all neceſſary preparations for their ſecurity, ordering Maximin's governors to be diſplaced, and commanding all the provinces to acknowledge Gordian for emperor. This order was differently received in different parts, as people were affected to one or the other party; in ſome provinces the governors were ſlain; in others, the meſſengers of the ſenate; ſo that all parts of the empire felt the conſequences of the civil war.

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In the mean time, when Maximin was informed of theſe charges againſt him, his rage appeared ungovernable. He roared like a ſavage beaſt, and violently ſtruck his head againſt the wall, ſhowing every inſtance of ungovernable diſtraction. At length, his fury being ſomewhat ſubſided, he called his whole army together; and, in a ſet ſpeech, exhorted them to revenge his cauſe, giving them the ſtrongeſt aſſurances, that they ſhould poſſeſs the eſtates of all ſuch as had offended. The ſoldiers unanimouſly promiſed to be faithful; they received his harangue with their uſual acclamations; and, thus encouraged, he led them towards Rome, breathing nothing but ſlaughter and revenge. However, he found many obſtacles to his impetuoſity; and, though he deſired nothing ſo much as diſpatch, his marches were incommodious and ſlow. The tumultuous and diſobedient armies of the empire, were, at preſent, very different from the legions that were led on by a Sylla, or a Cæſar; they were laden with baggage, and followed by ſlaves and women, rather reſembling an eaſtern caravan, than a military battalion. To theſe inconveniences alſo was added the hatred of the cities through which he paſſed, the inhabitants all abandoning their houſes upon his approach, and ſecuring their proviſions in proper hiding-places. However, in this complication of

inconveniences and misfortunes, his affairs began to wear a favourable appearance in Africa; for Capelianus, the governor of Numidia, raiſed a body of troops in his favour, and marched againſt Gordian, towards Carthage, where he fought the younger Gordian, ſlew him, and deſtroyed his army. His father hearing of the death of his ſon, together with the loſs of the battle, ſtrangled himſelf in his own girdle. Capelianus, purſuing his victory, entered Carthage, where he gave a looſe to pillage and ſlaughter, under a pretence of revenging the cauſe of Maximin. The news of theſe ſucceſſes was ſoon brought to the emperor, who now increaſed his diligence, and flattered himſelf with a ſpeedy opportunity of revenge. He led on his large army by haſty journeys into Italy, threatening deſtruction to all his oppoſers, and ardently wiſhing for freſh opportunities of ſlaughter.

Nothing could exceed the conſternation of the ſenate upon the news of this defeat. They now ſaw themſelves not only deprived of the aſſiſtance of Gordian and his ſon, on whom they greatly relied, but alſo oppoſed by two formidable tyrants, each commanding a victorious army, directly marching towards Rome, and meditating nothing but vengeance. In this afflicting exigence, they, with great ſolemnity, met at the temple of Jupiter, and after the moſt

mature

mature deliberation. choſe Pupienus and Balbinus emperors conjointly. Theſe were men who had acquired the eſteem of the public both in war and peace, having commanded armies and governed provinces with great reputation; and being now appointed to oppoſe Maximin, they made what levies they could, both in Rome and the country. With theſe, Pupienus marched to ſtop the progreſs of the invaders, leaving the city to a freſh and unlooked-for calamity. This was occaſioned by two of Maximin's ſoldiers, who, entering the ſenate-houſe, were ſlain by the ſenators. The death of theſe men quickly gave offence to the body of the prætorian ſoldiers, who inſtantly reſolved to take revenge, but were oppoſed by the citizens; ſo that nothing was ſeen throughout Rome but tumult, ſlaughter, and cruelty. In this univerſal confuſion the calamity was increaſed, by the ſoldiers ſetting the city on fire, while the wretched inhabitants were combating each other in the midſt of the flames.

Nevertheleſs, Maximin himſelf, in whoſe favour theſe ſeditions were promoted, did not ſeem to be more fortunate. Upon being informed of the new election of emperors, his fury was again renewed, and he paſſed the Alps, entering Italy, expecting to refreſh his fatigued and famiſhed army in that fertile part of the country. But in this he was entirely

diſappointed; the ſenate had taken ſuch care to remove all kinds of ſuſtenance to fortified places, that he ſtill found himſelf reduced to his former neceſſities, while his army began to murmur for want. To this another diſappointment was added ſhortly after; for approaching the city of Aquileia, which he expected to enter without any difficulty, he was aſtoniſhed to find it prepared for the moſt obſtinate reſiſtance, and reſolved to hold out a regular ſiege. This city was well fortified and populous, and the inhabitants greatly averſe to Maximin's government; but what added ſtill more to its ſtrength, it was commanded by two excellent generals, Criſpinus and Menophilus, who had ſo well furniſhed it with men and ammunition, that Maximin found no ſmall reſiſtance, even in inveſting the place. His firſt attempt was to take the city by ſtorm; but the beſieged threw down ſuch quantities of ſcalding pitch and ſulphur upon his ſoldiers, that they were unable to continue the aſſault. He then determined upon a blockade; but the inhabitants were ſo reſolute, that even the old men and children were ſeen combating upon the walls, while the women cut off their hair, to furniſh the ſoldiers with bow-ſtrings. Maximin's rage, at this unexpected oppoſition, was now ungovernable: having no enemy to wreak his reſentment upon, he turned it againſt his

his own commanders. He put many of his generals to death, as if the city had held out through their neglect or incapacity, while famine made great depredations upon the reſt of his army. Nothing now appeared on either ſide to terminate the conteſt, except the total deſtruction of either. But a mutiny in Maximin's own army, for ſome time reſcued the declining empire from deſtruction, and ſaved the lives of thouſands. The ſoldiers being long harraſſed by famine and fatigue, and hearing of revolts on every ſide, reſolved to terminate their calamities by the tyrant's death. His great ſtrength, and being always armed, were, at firſt, the principal motives to deter any from aſſaſſinating him; but at length having made his guards accomplices in their deſign, they ſet upon him, while he ſlept at noon in his tent, and ſlew both him and his ſon, whom he had made his partner in the empire, without any oppoſition. Thus died this moſt remarkable man, after an uſurpation of about three years, and in the ſixty-fifth year of his age. His aſſiduity, when in humble ſtation, and his cruelty, when in power, ſerve to evince, that there are ſome men, whoſe virtues are fitted for obſcurity; as there are others, who only ſhow themſelves great, when placed in an exalted ſtation.

CHAP. XXVIII.

PUPIENUS and BALBINUS, making together the Twenty-ſeventh EMPEROR of ROME.

U.C.991. A.D.238. THE tyrant being dead, and his body thrown to dogs and birds of prey, Pupienus and Balbinus continued for ſome time emperors without oppoſition. But the prætorian ſoldiers, who had long been notorious for mutiny and treaſon, ſoon reſolved on further change. Nor did the diſſenſions between the new-made emperors themſelves a little contribute to their downfall; for though both were remarkable for wiſdom and age, yet they could not reſtrain the mutual jealouſy of each other's power. Pupienus claimed the ſuperiority from his great experience; while Balbinus was equally aſpiring, upon account of his family and fortune.

In this ill-judged conteſt, the prætorian ſoldiers, who were the enemies of both, ſet upon them in their palace, at a time when their guards were amuſed with ſeeing the Capitoline games. Pupienus, perceiving their tumultuous approach, ſent, with the utmoſt ſpeed, for aſſiſtance

ance from his colleague; but he, out of a culpable ſuſpicion, that ſomething was deſigned againſt himſelf, refuſed to ſend ſuch of the German guards as were next his perſon. Thus the ſeditious ſoldiers found an eaſy acceſs to both the emperors' apartments, and dragging them from the palace towards the camp, ſlew them both, leaving their dead bodies in the ſtreets, as a dreadful inſtance of their ſedition.

CHAP. XXIX.

GORDIAN, the Twenty-eighth EMPEROR of ROME.

IN the midſt of this ſedition, as the mutineers were proceeding along, they, by accident, met Gordian, the grandſon of him who was ſlain in Africa, and declared him emperor on the ſpot. The ſenate and people had been long reduced to the neceſſity of ſuffering their emperors to be nominated by the army; ſo that all they could do, in the preſent inſtance, was to confirm their choice. This prince was no more than ſixteen years old when he began his reign, but his virtues ſeemed to compenſate for his want of experience. His principal aims were, to unite the oppoſing members of the government, U.C. 991. A.D. 238.

and to reconcile the ſoldiers and citizens to each other. His learning is ſaid to have been equal to his virtues; and we are aſſured that he had ſixty-two thouſand books in his library. His reſpect for Miſithæus, his governor and inſtructor, was ſuch, that he married his daughter, and profited by his counſels, in all the critical circumſtances of his reign.

The four firſt years of this emperor's reign were attended with the utmoſt proſperity; but in the fifth, he was alarmed with accounts from the Eaſt, that Sapor, king of Perſia, had furiouſly invaded the confines of the Roman empire, and having taken Antioch, had pillaged Syria, and all the adjacent provinces. Beſides the Perſians, the Goths alſo invaded the empire on their ſide, pouring down like an inundation from the north, and attempting to fix their reſidence in the kingdom of Thrace. To oppoſe both theſe invaſions, Gordian aſſembled an army; and having gained ſome victories over the Goths, whom he obliged to retire, he turned his arms againſt the Perſians, whom he defeated upon ſeveral occaſions, and forced to return home with diſgrace. In gaining theſe advantages, Miſithæus, whom he had made prætorian præfect, had the principal ſhare; his wiſdom directed to ſucceſs, and his courage inſured it. But he dying ſoon after (as it is ſuppoſed being poiſoned by Philip, an Arabian, who

who was appointed his ſucceſſor) the fortunes of Gordian ſeemed to die with him. The army began to be no longer ſupplied with proviſion as uſual; murmurs were heard to prevail, and theſe were artfully fomented by Philip. Things thus proceeding from bad to worſe; Philip was, at firſt, made equal in the command of the empire; ſhortly after, he was inveſted with the ſole power, and, at length, finding himſelf capable of perpetrating his long meditated cruelty, Gordian was, by his order, ſlain in the twenty-ſecond year of his age, after a ſucceſsful reign of near ſix years.

CHAP. XXIX.

PHILIP, the Twenty-ninth EMPEROR of ROME.

PHILIP, having thus murdered his benefactor, was ſo fortunate as to be immediately acknowledged emperor by the army. The ſenate alſo, though they ſeemed at firſt to oppoſe his power, confirmed his election, and gave him, as uſual, the title of Auguſtus. He was about forty years old when he came to the throne, being the ſon of an obſcure Arabian, who had been captain of a band of robbers. Upon his exaltation, he aſſociated his ſon, U.C.996. A.D.243.

ſon, a boy of ſix years of age, as his partner in the empire; and, in order to ſecure his power at home, made peace with the Perſians, and marched his army towards Rome. On his way having conceived a deſire to viſit his native country of Arabia, he built there a city called Philiſſopolis; and from thence returning to Rome, he was received as emperor, and treated with all the marks of ſubmiſſion, though not of joy. Perhaps it was to put the people into good humour, that he cauſed the ſecular games to be celebrated, with a magnificence ſuperior to any of his predeceſſors, it being juſt a thouſand years from the building of the city. Upon occaſion of theſe games, we are told that both Philip and his ſon were converted to Chriſtianity. However this be, a murderer and an ungrateful uſurper does no great honour to whatever opinion he may happen to embrace.

We have little account of the latter part of his reign in the wretched and mutilated hiſtories of the times; we only learn, that the Goths, renewing their invaſions, Marinus, Philip's lieutenant, who was ſent againſt them, revolted and cauſed himſelf to be declared emperor. This revolt however, was but of ſhort duration; for the army which had raiſed him, repenting of their raſhneſs, depoſed and put him to death. Decius was the perſon whom Philip appointed

to command in the room of the revolting general. The chief merit of Decius with the emperor was, that when Marinus had rebelled, he averred, in the ſenate, That the traitor's preſumption would be very ſhortly his ruin; which, when it happened accordingly, Philip appointed him to ſucceed in the command of the rebellious army. Decius, who was a man of great ſubtilty, being thus entruſted with ſo much power, upon arriving at the army, found, that the ſoldiers were reſolved to inveſt him with the ſupreme authority. He, therefore, ſeemed to ſuffer their importunities, as if through conſtraint; and, in the mean time, ſent Philip word, that he had unwillingly aſſumed the title of emperor, the better to ſecure it to the rightful poſſeſſor; adding, that he only looked for a convenient opportunity of giving up his pretenſions and title together. Philip, however, knew mankind too well to rely upon ſuch profeſſions: he, therefore, got together what forces he could, from the ſeveral provinces, and led them forward towards the confines of Italy. However, the army was ſcarce arrived at Verona, when it revolted in favour of Decius, and, ſetting violently upon Philip, one of the ſentinels at a blow cut off his head; or rather cleaved it aſunder, ſeparating the under jaw from the upper.

Such was the deſerved death of Philip in the forty-fifth year of his age, after a reign of about five years; Decius being univerſally acknowledged as his ſucceſſor.

CHAP. XXXI.

Decius, the Thirtieth Emperor of Rome

U. C. 1001. A.D. 248.

THE activity and wiſdom of Decius ſeemed in ſome meaſure to ſtop the haſtening decline of the Roman empire. The ſenate ſeemed to think ſo highly of his merits, that they voted him not inferior to Trajan; and indeed he ſeemed, in every inſtance, to conſult their dignity in particular, and the welfare of all the inferior ranks of people. He, among other conceſſions, permitted them to chooſe a cenſor, as was the cuſtom in the flouriſhing times of Rome; and Valerian, his general, a man of ſuch ſtrict morals, that his life was ſaid to be a continual cenſorſhip, was choſen to that dignity.

But no virtues could now prevent the approaching downfall of the ſtate; the obſtinate diſputes between the Pagans and the Chriſtians within the empire, and the unceaſing irruptions of barbarous nations from without, enfeebled

feebled it beyond the power of a remedy. To ſtop theſe, a perſecution of the Chriſtians who were now grown the moſt numerous body of the people, was impolitickly, not to ſay unjuſtly, begun; in which thouſands were put to death, and all the arts of cruelty tried in vain to leſſen their growing numbers.

This perſecution was ſucceeded by dreadful devaſtation from the Goths, particularly in Thrace and Mœſia where they had been moſt ſucceſsful. Theſe irruptions Decius went to oppoſe in perſon, and coming to an engagement with them ſlew thirty thouſand of theſe barbarians in one battle. However, being reſolved to purſue his victory, he was by the treachery of Gallus, his own general, led into a defile, where the king of the Goths had ſecret information to attack him. In this diſadvantageous ſituation, Decius firſt ſaw his ſon killed with an arrow, and ſoon after his whole army totally put to the rout. Wherefore, reſolving not to ſurvive the loſs, he put ſpurs to his horſe, and inſtantly plunging into a quagmire, was ſwallowed up, and his body could never after be found. He died in the fiftieth year of his age, after a ſhort reign of two years aud ſix months leaving the character of an excellent prince, and one capable of averting the deſtruction of the empire, if human means could have effected it.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXII.

GALLUS, the Thirty-firſt EMPEROR of ROME.

U. C. 1004. A.D. 251. GALLUS, who had thus betrayed the Roman army, had addreſs enough to get himſelf declared emperor by that part of it which ſurvived the defeat; he was forty-five years old when he began to reign, and was deſcended from an honourable family in Rome. He was the firſt who bought a diſhonourable peace from the enemies of the ſtate, agreeing to pay a conſiderable annual tribute to the Goths, whom it was his duty to repreſs. Having thus purchaſed a ſhort remiſſion from war, by the diſgrace of his country, he returned to Rome, to give a looſe to his pleaſures, regardleſs of the wretched ſituation of the empire.

Nothing can be more deplorable than the ſtate of the Roman provinces at that time. The Goths, and other barbarous nations, not ſatisfied with their late bribes to continue in peace, broke in, like a torrent, upon the eaſtern parts of Europe. On the other ſide, the Perſians and Scythians committed unheard-of ravages in Meſopotamia and Syria. The emperor

emperor, regardleſs of every national calamity, was loſt in debauch and ſenſuality at home; and the Pagans were allowed a power of perſecuting the Chriſtians through all parts of the ſtate. Theſe calamities were ſucceeded by a peſtilence from Heaven, that ſeemed to have in general ſpread over every part of the earth, and which continued raging for ſeveral years, in an unheard-of manner; and all theſe by a civil war, which followed ſhortly after, between Gallus and his general Æmilianus, who, having gained a victory over the Goths, was proclaimed emperor by his conquering army. Gallus, hearing this, ſoon rouzed from the intoxication of pleaſure, and prepared to oppoſe his dangerous rival. Both armies met in Mœſia, and a battle enſued, in which Æmilianus was victorious, and Gallus, with his ſon, were ſlain. His death was merited, and his vices were ſuch, as to deſerve the deteſtation of poſterity. He died in the forty-ſeventh year of his age, after an unhappy reign of two years and four months, in which the empire ſuffered inexpreſſible calamities.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXII.

VALERIAN, the Thirty-ſecond EMPEROR of ROME.

U. C. 1006. A.D. 253. ÆMILIANUS, after his victory over Gallus, expected to be acknowledged as emperor, but he ſoon found himſelf miſerably diſappointed. The ſenate refuſed to acknowledge his claims; and an army that was ſtationed near the Alps, choſe Valerian, their own commander, to ſucceed to the throne. In conſequence of this, Æmilianus's ſoldiers began to conſider their general as an obſtacle to the univerſal tranquillity, and ſlew him, in order to avoid the miſchiefs of a civil war.

Valerian being thus univerſally acknowledged as emperor, although arrived at the age of ſeventy, ſet about reforming the ſtate with a ſpirit that ſeemed to mark a good mind and unabated vigour. But reformation was then grown almoſt impracticable. The diſputes between the Pagans and Chriſtians divided the empire as before, and a dreadful perſecution of the latter enſued. The northern nations over-ran the Roman dominions in a more formidable manner than ever, and the empire be-

gan to be uſurped by a multitude of petty leaders, each of whom neglecting the general intereſt of the ſtate, ſet up for himſelf. To add to theſe calamities, the Perſians, under their king Sapor, invaded Syria, and coming into Meſopotamia, took the unfortunate Valerian priſoner, as he was making preparations to oppoſe them. Nothing can exceed the indignities, as well as the cruelties, which were practiſed upon this unhappy monarch, thus fallen into the hands of his enemies. Sapor, we are told, always uſed him as a footſtool for mounting his horſe; he added the bitterneſs of ridicule to his inſults, and uſually obſerved, That an attitude like that to which Valerian was reduced, was the beſt ſtatue that could be erected in honour of his victory. This horrid life of inſult and ſufferance continued for ſeven years, and was at length terminated, by the cruel Perſian's commanding his priſoner's eyes to be plucked out, and afterwards cauſing him to be flead alive.

CHAP. XXXIV.

GALIENUS, the Thirty-third EMPEROR of ROME.

U. C. 1012, A.D. 259. VALERIAN being taken priſoner, as hath been juſt mentioned, Galienus, his ſon, promiſing to revenge the inſult, was choſen emperor, being then about forty-one years old. However, he ſoon diſcovered that he ſought rather the ſplendour, than the toils, of empire; for after having overthrown Ingenuus, a commander in Pannonia, who had aſſumed the title of emperor, he ſate down, as if fatigued with conqueſt, and gave himſelf up to eaſe and luxury. While the empire was afflicted throughout with peſtilence and famine; while the Germans over-ran Rhætia; while the Allemans waſted Gaul; while the Goths, the Quadi, and Sarmatians poured forth from their foreſts, and carried deſolation over half the empire, Galienus remained in the utmoſt tranquillity at Rome, inventing new pleaſures, bathing among proſtitutes, ſtudying how to preſerve figs green all the year, and diverting himſelf among mimicks, paraſites, and buffoons. When informed of the loſs of his provinces,

provinces, or the calamities of the ſtate, he uſually anſwered with a jeſt; ſo that his total inattention gave riſe to a number of rebellions, which divided the empire into a multitude of independent ſovereignties.

At this time no leſs than thirty pretenders were ſeen contending with each other for the dominion of the ſtate, and adding the calamities of civil war to the reſt of the misfortunes of this devoted empire. Theſe are generally known in hiſtory by the name of the Thirty Tyrants. Hiſtorians are divided as to their number, names, and pretenſions; it only appears, in the ill-digeſted accounts of theſe times, that they were not at all contemporary, but ſucceeded each other whenever they found an opportunity of aſſerting their pretenſions. It will be needleſs to dilate upon accounts and characters, that have nothing very remarkable to preſerve them from oblivion; the names of theſe ſhort-lived pretenders will ſuffice. In the Eaſt, Macrianus, and his two ſons, III. Valens, IV. Piſo, V. In Illyricum, Aureolus, VI. In Palmyra, Œdenatus, VII. Herod, VIII. Baliſta, IX. Mæonias, X. Zenobia, and her two ſons, XIII. In Ægypt, Æmilian, XIV. In Africa, Celſus, XV. In Pannonia, Regillianus, XVI. Ingenuus, XVII. Cenſorinus, XVIII. Trebellianus, XIX. In Gaul, Poſthumus, XX. Victorinus, XXI. Poſthumus Junior, XXII. Lollianus. XXIII. Victoria, XXIV.

Victorinus Junior, XXV. Tetricus, XXVI. Tetricus Junior, XXVII. Cyriades, XXVIII. Saturninus, XXIX. Marius, XXX.

It may be eaſily ſuppoſed, that a ſtate, harraſſed by ſuch a number of oppoſing intereſts, and inimical armies, was in the moſt dreadful ſituation; and accordingly we find, through all parts of the empire, nothing but rapine, murder, and deſolation; the government, like a mighty ruin, dropping by piece-meal on the heads of thoſe it was originally raiſed to protect, and threatening every moment univerſal deſtruction. In this general calamity, Galienus, though at firſt ſeemingly inſenſible, was, at length, obliged, for his own private ſecurity, to take the field, and led an army to beſiege the city of Milan, which had been taken by one of the thirty uſurping tyrants. It was there he was ſlain by his own ſoldiers, Martian one of his generals having conſpired againſt him.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXV.

CLAUDIUS the Thirty-fourth EMPEROR of ROME.

THE death of Galienus proved very advantageous to the empire, and gave a general ſatisfaction to all, except his ſoldiers, who hoped to reap the reward of their treachery by the plunder of Milan. But being fruſtrated in theſe expectations, and, in ſome meaſure, kept within bounds, by the largeſſes of Martian, Flavius Claudius being nominated to ſucceed, was joyfully accepted by all orders of the ſtate, and his title confirmed by the ſenate and the people. U. C. 1021. A.D. 268.

We are not ſufficiently aſſured of this emperor's lineage and country. Some affirm that he was born in Dalmatia, and deſcended from an ancient family there; others aſſert, that he was a Trojan; and others, that he was ſon to the emperor Gordian. But, whatever might have been his deſcent, his merits were by no means doubtful. He was a man of great valour and conduct, having performed the moſt excellent ſervices againſt the Goths, who had long continued to make their irruptions

into the empire. He was now about fifty-five years old, equally remarkable for the ſtrength of his body and the vigour of his mind; he was chaſte and temperate, a rewarder of the good, and a ſevere puniſher of ſuch as tranſgreſſed the laws. Thus endowed, therefore, he in ſome meaſure put a ſtop to the precipitate decline of the empire, and, once more, ſeemed to reſtore the glory of Rome.

His firſt ſucceſs, upon being made emperor, was againſt Aureolus, an uſurper of the empire, whom he defeated near Milan. His next expedition was to oppoſe the Goths, againſt whom he led a very numerous army. Theſe barbarians had made their principal and moſt ſucceſsful irruptions into Thrace and Macedonia, ſwarmed over all Greece, and had pillaged the famous city of Athens, which had long been the ſchool of all the polite arts to the Romans. The Goths, however, had no veneration for theſe embelliſhments that tend to ſoften and humanize the mind, but deſtroyed all monuments of taſte and learning with the moſt ſavage alacrity. It was upon one of theſe occaſions, that having heaped together a large pile of books, in order to burn them, one of their commanders diſſuaded them from the deſign, alledging, That the time which the Grecians ſhould waſte on books, would only render them more unqualified for war. But

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the empire ſeemed to tremble, not only on that ſide, but almoſt on every quarter. At the ſame time, above three hundred thouſand of theſe barbarians (the Heruli, the Trutangi, the Virturgi, and many nameleſs and uncivilized nations) came down the river Danube, with two thouſand ſhips, fraught with men and ammunition, ſpreading terror and devaſtation on every ſide.

In this ſtate of univerſal diſmay, Claudius, alone, ſeemed to continue unſhaken. He marched his diſproportioned army againſt the ſavage invaders, and, though but ill-prepared for engaging with them, as the forces of the empire were then employed in different parts of the world, he came off victorious, and made an incredible ſlaughter of the enemy. The whole of their great army was either cut to pieces or taken priſoners; houſes were filled with their arms, and ſcarce a province of the empire that was not furniſhed with ſlaves, from thoſe that ſurvived the defeat.

Theſe ſucceſſes were followed by many others in different parts of the empire; ſo that the Goths, for a conſiderable time, made but a feeble oppoſition.

He ſome time after marched againſt the revolted Germans, and overthrew them with conſiderable ſlaughter. His laſt expedition was to oppoſe Tetricus and Zenobia, his two

puiſſant rivals in the empire. But on his march, as he approached near the city Sirmium, in Pannonia, he was ſeiſed with a peſtilential fever, of which he died in a few days, to the great regret of his ſubjects, and the irreparable loſs of the Roman empire. His reign, which was not of quite two years continuance, was active and ſucceſsful; and ſuch is the character given of him by hiſtorians, that he is ſaid to have united in himſelf, the moderation of Auguſtus, the valour of Trajan, and the piety of Antoninus.

CHAP. XXXVI.

AURELIAN, the Thirty-fifth EMPEROR of ROME.

U. C. 1023. A.D. 270. IMMEDIATELY after the death of Claudius the army made choice of Aurelian, who was at that time maſter of the horſe, and eſteemed the moſt valiant commander of his time. However, his promotion was not without oppoſition, on the part of the ſenate, as Quintillus, the brother of the deceaſed emperor, put in his claim, and was, for a while, acknowledged at Rome. But his authority was of a very ſhort duration; for finding himſelf abandoned by thoſe

who at firſt inſtigated him to declare for the throne, he choſe to prevent the ſeverity of his rival, by a voluntary death; and cauſing his veins to be opened, expired after having reigned but ſeventeen days.

Aurelian, being thus univerſally acknowledged by all the ſtates of the empire, aſſumed the command with a greater ſhare of power than his predeceſſors had enjoyed for ſome time before. This active monarch was born of mean and obſcure parentage in Dacia, and was about fifty-five years old at the time of his coming to the throne. He had ſpent the early part of his life in the army, and had riſen through all the gradations of military duty. He was of unſhaken courage and amazing ſtrength; he, in one ſingle engagement, killed forty of the enemy with his own hand, and above nine hundred at ſeveral different times. In ſhort, his valour and expedition were ſuch, that he was compared to Julius Cæſar; and, in fact, only wanted mildneſs and clemency to be every way his equal.

The whole of this enterprizing monarch's reign was ſpent in repreſſing the irruptions of the northern nations; in humbling every other pretender to the empire, and puniſhing the monſtrous irregularities of his own ſubjects. He defeated the Marcomanni, a fierce and terrible nation of Germany, that had invaded Italy,

Italy, in three ſeveral engagements; and at length totally deſtroyed the whole army. He was no leſs ſucceſsful againſt Zenobia, the queen of the Eaſt, a woman of the moſt heroick qualifications, who had long diſclaimed the Roman power, and eſtabliſhed an empire of her own. To oppoſe this extraordinary woman, Aurelian paſſed his army over into Aſia, and ſurmounting all the obſtructions that were oppoſed againſt him, he at length ſate down before Tyana, a city of Cappadocia; which ſeemed reſolved to hold out againſt him, and actually, for ſome time, ſtopped his progreſs. The unexpected obſtinacy of the beſieged, ſerved not a little to enrage the emperor, who was naturally precipitate and furious. He vowed, that upon taking the city, he would ſo puniſh the inhabitants, as not to leave a dog alive among them. After ſome time the city was taken: and when his whole army expected the plunder of ſo wealthy a place, and reminded him of his former proteſtations, he reſtrained their impetuoſity, and only ordered all the dogs in the place to be deſtroyed. He afterwards pretended that he was reſtrained from ſatiating his reſentment on the inhabitants, by an apparition of the famous Appollonius, that warned him not to deſtroy his birth-place. This excuſe was no doubt fictitious; but

but we can eaſily pardon falſehood, when it is brought to the aſſiſtance of humanity.

From Tyana he marched to meet the enemy, who waited his approach, near the city of Emeſa in Syria. Both armies were very powerful and numerous; the one trained up under the moſt valiant leader of his time; the other led on by a woman, who ſeemed born to controul the pride of man. The battle was long and obſtinate; victory for ſome time inclined to the ſide of the Aſiaticks; but the perſeverance of Aurelian's generals, at laſt, carried the day: The enemy was defeated, and Zenobia was obliged to fly to Palmyra for ſafety. But ſhe was ſoon purſued thither by the conqueror, who did all in his power to induce her to ſubmiſſion; but the haughty queen refuſed his proffered terms of life and ſecurity, with ſcorn, relying on the ſuccours which ſhe expected from the Perſians, the Saracens, and the Armenians. However, Aurelian's diligence ſurmounted every obſtacle; he intercepted the Perſian auxiliaries and diſperſed them; the Saracens ſhared the ſame fate; and the Armenians were, by plauſible promiſes, induced to eſpouſe his intereſt. Thus Zenobia, deceived in her expected ſuccours, and deſpairing of relief, attempted to fly into Perſia; but was taken by a choſen body of horſe ſent to purſue her. The city

city of Palmyra likewiſe ſubmitted to the conqueror; and Longinus, the celebrated critick, and ſecretary to the queen, was by Aurelian's order put to death. Zenobia was reſerved to grace his triumph, and was afterwards allotted ſuch lands, and ſuch an income, as ſerved to maintain her in almoſt her former ſplendor.

Aurelian having thus reſtored peace to the empire, endeavoured, by the rigours of juſtice, to bring back virtue alſo. He was very ſtrict to puniſh the crimes of the ſoldiery; and in his orders to his lieutenants, inſiſted that the peaſants ſhould not be plundered upon any pretence: that not even a grape, a grain of ſalt, or a drop of oil ſhould be exacted unjuſtly.

He cauſed a ſoldier, who had committed adultery with his hoſteſs, to have his feet tied to two trees, forcibly bent at top to meet each other; which being let looſe and ſuddenly recoiling, tore the criminal in two. This was a ſeverity that might be conſidered as cruelty; but the vices of the times, in ſome meaſure, required it. In theſe puniſhments, inflicted on the guilty, the Chriſtians, who had all along been growing more numerous, were ſharers. Againſt theſe he drew up ſeveral letters and edicts, which ſhowed that he intended a very ſevere perſecution; but, if we may believe the credulous hiſtorians of the times, he was deterred,

terred, juſt as he was going to ſign them, by a thunder-bolt which fell ſo near his perſon, that all people judged him deſtroyed.

But however heaven might have interpoſed on this occaſion, it is certain, that his ſeverities, at laſt, were the cauſe of his deſtruction. Meneſtheus, his principal ſecretary, having been threatened by him, for ſome fault which he had committed, began to conſider how he might prevent the premeditated blow. For this purpoſe he forged a roll of the names of ſeveral perſons, whom he pretended the emperor had marked out for death, adding his own, to ſtrengthen him in the confidence of the party. The ſcroll, thus contrived, was ſhown with an air of the utmoſt ſecreſy to ſome of the perſons concerned; and they, to procure their ſafety, immediately agreed with him to deſtroy the emperor. This reſolution was ſoon put into execution; for as the emperor paſſed with a ſmall guard, from Uraclea in Thrace, towards Byzantium, the conſpirators ſet upon him, and ſlew him with very ſmall reſiſtance. He was ſlain in the ſixtieth, or, as ſome ſay, the ſixty-third year of his age, after a very active reign of almoſt five years.

CHAP

CHAP. XXXVII.

TACITUS, the Thirty-ſixth EMPEROR of ROME.

U. C. 1028. A.D. 275.

THE number of pretenders to the throne, which had formerly infeſted the empire, were by the laſt monarch's activity ſo entirely removed, that there now ſeemed to be none that would even venture to declare himſelf a candidate; and, on the other ſide, the ſenate declined it; ſo that a ſpace of near eight months elapſed in their interchangings of mutual deference. At length, however, the ſenate made choice of Tacitus, a man of great merit, and no way ambitious of the honours that were offered him. Upon being ſolicited to accept the empire, he at firſt refuſed, and retired to his country-houſe in Campania, to avoid their importunities; but being at length prevailed upon, he accepted the reins of government, being at that time ſeventy-five years old.

One of the firſt acts of his government was to puniſh thoſe who had conſpired againſt the late emperor: particularly Meneſtheus, who was impaled alive, his body being thrown to be

be devoured by wild beaſts. His eſtate alſo was confiſcated to the exchequer; and his ready money, which was conſiderable, applied towards paying the army. During this ſhort reign, the ſenate ſeemed to have exerciſed a conſiderable ſhare of authority, and the hiſtorians of the times are very liberal of their praiſes to ſuch emperors as were thus willing to divide their power. Upon endeavouring to obtain the conſulſhip for his brother Probus, he was refuſed it by the ſenate, at which he ſeemed no way moved, but calmly remarked, that the ſenate beſt knew whom to chooſe. This moderation prevailed in all the reſt of his conduct: he was extremely temperate; his table was plain, and furniſhed with nothing expenſive; he even prohibited his empreſs from wearing jewels, and forbad the uſe of gold and embroidery. He was fond of learning, and the memory of ſuch men as had deſerved well of their country; particularly the works of his nameſake Tacitus, the hiſtorian, were greatly honoured by him. He commanded that they ſhould be placed in every public library throughout the empire, and that many copies of them ſhould be tranſcribed at the publick charge.

A reign begun with ſuch moderation and juſtice, only wanted continuance to have made the empire happy; but after enjoying the

empire

empire about ſix months, he died of a fever in his march to oppoſe the Perſians and Scythians, who had invaded the eaſtern parts of the empire.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

PROBUS, the Thirty-ſeventh EMPEROR of ROME.

UPON the death of Tacitus, the army ſeemed divided in the choice of an emperor; one part of it choſe Florian, brother to the deceaſed; but the majority were for ſome time undetermined. They alledged, in their conferences with each other, the neceſſity of chooſing one eminent for valour, honeſty, piety, clemency, and probity: but the laſt virtue being that chiefly inſiſted upon, the whole army, as if by common conſent, cried out, that Probus ſhould be emperor. He was accordingly confirmed in this dignity, with all the uſual ſolemnities; and Florian, his opponent, finding himſelf deſerted, even by thoſe legions who had promiſed to ſtand up in his ſupport, opened his arteries and bled to death.

Probus was forty-four years old when he aſcended the throne, being born of noble parentage at Sirmium in Pannonia, and bred up

up a ſoldier from his youth. He began early to diſtinguiſh himſelf for his diſcipline and valour; being frequently the firſt man that, in beſieging towns, ſcaled the walls, or that burſt into the enemy's camp. He was equally remarkable for ſingle combats, and ſaving the lives of many eminent citizens. Nor were his activity and courage, when elected to the empire, leſs apparent than in his private ſtation. Every year now produced only new calamities to the empire; and freſh irruptions on every ſide threatened univerſal deſolation: perhaps at this time, no abilities except thoſe of Probus were capable of oppoſing ſuch united invaſions. He haſtened with an army to repreſs the Germans in Gaul, of whom he ſlew four hundred thouſand. He then marched into Dalmatia, to oppoſe and ſubdue the Sarmatians. From thence he led his forces into Thrace, and compelled the Goths to ſue for peace. He afterwards turned his arms towards Aſia, ſubdued the province of Iſauria; and, marching onward, conquered a people called the Blemii; who, leaving their native foreſts of Æthiopia, had poſſeſſed themſelves of Arabia and Judæa. Narſius alſo, the king of Perſia, ſubmitted at his approach; and upon his return into Europe, he divided the depopulated parts of Thrace among its barbarous invaders: a circumſtance that afterwards produced great calamities in the empire.

His diligence was not leſs conſpicuous in ſuppreſſing inteſtine commotions. Saturnius, being compelled by the Egyptians to declare himſelf emperor, was defeated and ſlain. Proculus alſo, a perſon remarkable only for his great attachment to women, and who boaſted in a letter, that, having taken an hundred Sarmatian virgins priſoners, he deflowered ten of them in one night, and all the reſt within a fortnight; this man, I ſay, ſet up againſt the emperor, but was compelled to fly, and at length delivered up by the Germans. At the ſame time, Bonoſus (who was as remarkable a votary to Bacchus, being able to drink as much wine as ten men, without being diſordered) rebelled, and, being overcome, hanged himſelf in deſpair. Probus, when he ſaw him, immediately after his death, could not avoid pointing at the body, and ſaying, "There hangs, not a man, but a bottle." But ſtill, notwithſtanding every effort to give quiet to the empire, the barbarians, who ſurrounded it, kept it in continual alarms. They were frequently repulſed to their native wilds, but they as duly returned with freſh rage and increaſed ferocity. The Goths and Vandals, finding the emperor engaged in quelling domeſtic diſputes, renewed their accuſtomed inroads, and once more felt the puniſhment of their preſumption. They were conquered in

ſeveral engagements, and Probus returned in triumph to Rome. His active temper, however, would not ſuffer him to continue at reſt while any of the enemy were left to conquer. In his laſt expedition, he led his ſoldiers againſt the Perſians; and going through Sirmium, the place of his nativity, he there employed ſeveral thouſands of his ſoldiers in draining a fen that was incommodious to the inhabitants. The fatigues of this undertaking, and the great reſtraint that was laid upon the licentious manners of the ſoldiers, produced a conſpiracy, which ended in his ruin. The ſoldiers taking their opportunity, as he was marching into Greece, ſlew him, after he had reigned ſix years and four months, with general approbation. As an inſtance of the eſteem, which even his rebellious army had for him, they erected him a ſumptuous monument with this epitaph—"Here lies the emperor Probus, "truly deſerving the name; a ſubduer of bar-"barians, and a conqueror of uſurpers."

CHAP. XXXIX.

CARUS and his two Sons, CARINUS and NUMERIAN, making together the Thirty-eighth EMPEROR of ROME.

U. C. 1035. A.D. 282. THE ſhort continuance of this triumvirate has given hiſtorians but little room for any thing very material concerning it. Carus, who was prætorian prefect to the deceaſed emperor, was choſen by the army to ſucceed him; and he, to ſtrengthen his authority, united his two ſons, Carinus and Numerian, with him in command; the former of whom was as much ſullied by his vices, as the younger was remarkable for his virtues, modeſty, and courage. The new emperor had ſcarce time to puniſh the murderers of the late monarch, when he was alarmed by a freſh irruption of the Sarmatians, over whom he gained a ſignal victory. The Perſian monarch alſo made ſome attempts upon the empire; but Carus aſſured his ambaſſadors, that if their maſter perſiſted in his obſtinacy, all his fields ſhould ſoon be as bare as his own bald head; which he ſhowed them. In conſequence of this threat, he marched to the walls

walls of Cteſiphon; and a dreadful battle enſuing, he once more gained a complete victory. What the reſult of this ſucceſs might have been, is not known, for he was ſhortly after ſtruck dead by lightening in his tent, with many others who were round him.

Numerian, the youngeſt ſon, who accompanied his father in this expedition, was inconſolable for his death, and brought ſuch a diſorder upon his eyes with weeping, that he was obliged to be carried along with the army, ſhut up in a cloſe litter. The peculiarity of his ſituation, after ſome time, excited the ambition of Aper, his father-in-law, who ſuppoſed that he could now, without any great danger, aim at the empire himſelf. He therefore hired a mercenary villain to murder the emperor in his litter; and, the better to conceal the fact, reported that he was ſtill alive, but unable to endure the light. In this manner was the dead body carried about for ſome days, Aper continuing to attend it with the utmoſt appearance of reſpect, and ſeeming to take orders as uſual. The offenſiveneſs, however, of its ſmell, at length, diſcovered the treachery, and excited an univerſal uproar throughout the army. In the midſt of this tumult, Diocleſian, one of the moſt noted commanders of his time, was choſen emperor, and with his own hand ſlew Aper; having thus, as it is ſaid, fulfilled a prophecy

which declared, that Dioclesian should be emperor after he had slain a boar.

Carinus, the remaining son, did not long survive his father and brother; for giving himself up to his vices, and yet, at the same time, opposing the new-made emperor, the competitors led their forces into Mœsia, where Dioclesian being victorious, Carinus was slain by a tribune of his own army, whose wife he had formerly abused.

CHAP. XL.

Dioclesian, the Thirty-ninth Emperor of Rome.

U. C. 1037. A.D. 284. DIOCLESIAN was a person of mean birth; being supposed to be, according to some, the son of a scrivener; and of a slave, according to others. He received his name from Dioclea, the town in which he was born. He was about forty years old when he was elected to the empire, and owed his exaltation entirely to his merit; having passed through all the gradations of office, with sagacity, courage, and success. Nor did the beginning of his reign, in the least, deceive the expectations his subjects

jects had formed in his favour. He pardoned all his enemies who had joined with Carinus, without injuring either their fortunes or honours. Conſcious alſo that the weight of the empire was too heavy for one alone to ſuſtain, he took in Maximian, his general, as a partner in the fatigues of duty, making him his equal and companion on the throne. Thus mutually aſſiſting each other, theſe two continued to live in ſtrict friendſhip, and, though ſomewhat differing in temper, (as Maximian was rather a man of vicious inclinations) yet they concurred in promoting the general good, and humbling their enemies. And it muſt be obſerved, that there never was a period, in which there were more numerous or formidable enemies to oppoſe.

The peaſants and labourers in Gaul made a dangerous inſurrection, under the conduct of Amandus and Helianus, but were ſubdued by Maximian. Achilleus, who commanded in Egypt, proclaimed himſelf emperor; and it was not without many bloody engagements, that he was overcome, and condemned by Diocleſian to be devoured by lions. In Africa, the Roman legions, in like manner, joining with many of the natives, ſeiſed upon the public revenues, and plundered thoſe who continued in their duty. Theſe were alſo ſubdued by Maximian; and after a long, dubious war,

conſtrained to ſue for peace. About the ſame time, a principal commander in Britain, named Carauſius, proclaimed himſelf emperor, and poſſeſſed himſelf of the iſland. To oppoſe this general's claims, Maximian made choice of Conſtantius Chlorus, whom he created Cæſar, and married to Theodora, his daughter-in-law. He, upon his arrival in Britain, finding Carauſius extremely politic, and continually reinforced from Germany, thought proper to come to an accommodation; ſo that this uſurper continued for ſeven years in quiet poſſeſſion of the whole iſland, till he was ſlain by Alectus, his friend and intimate. About this time, alſo, Narſius, king of Perſia and Parthia, began a dangerous war upon the empire, and invaded Meſopotamia. To ſtop the progreſs of the enemy upon this quarter, Diocleſian made choice of Galerius, ſurnamed Armentarius, from the report of his being the ſon of a cowherd, in Dacia; and he likewiſe was created Cæſar. His ſucceſs alſo, though very doubtful in the beginning, was, in the end, terminated according to his wiſhes. The Perſians were overcome in a deciſive engagement, their camp plundered and taken, and the king's wives and children made priſoners of war. There only remained, of all the enemies of the Roman empire, thoſe that lay to the northward unſubdued. Theſe were utterly uncon-

querable, as well upon account of their ſavage fierceneſs, as the inhoſpitable ſeverity of the climate and ſoil from whence they iſſued. Conſtantly at war with the Romans, they iſſued when the armies, that were to repreſs their invaſions, were called away; and upon their return, they as ſuddenly withdrew into their cold, barren, and inacceſſible retreats, which only themſelves could endure. In this manner the Scythians, Goths, Sarmatians, Alani, Carſii, and Quadi, poured down in incredible numbers; while every defeat ſeemed but to increaſe their ſtrength and perſeverance. Of theſe, multitudes were taken priſoners, and ſent to people the more ſouthern parts of the empire: ſtill greater numbers were deſtroyed; and though the reſt were driven back to their native foreſts, yet they continued ever mindful of their inveterate enmity, and, like a ſavage beaſt, only continued inactive, till they had licked their wounds for a new encounter.

During this interval, as if the external miſeries of the empire were not ſufficient, the tenth and laſt great perſecution was renewed againſt the Chriſtians. This is ſaid to have exceeded all the former in ſeverity; and ſuch was the zeal with which it was purſued, that, in an ancient inſcription, we are informed, that the government had effaced the name and ſuperſtition of the Chriſtians, and had reſtored and propagated the worſhip of the Gods. Their attempts,

tempts, however, were but the malicious efforts of an expiring party; for Chriſtianity ſoon after was eſtabliſhed by law, and triumphed over the malice of all its enemies. In the midſt of the troubles raiſed by this perſecution, and of the conteſts that ſtruck at the external parts of the ſtate, Diocleſian and Maximian ſurpriſed the world by reſigning their dignities on the ſame day, and both retiring into private ſtations. Hiſtorians are much divided concerning the motives that thus induced them to give up thoſe honours which they had purchaſed with ſo much danger. Some aſcribe it to the philoſophical turn of Diocleſian; and others, to his being diſguſted with the obſtinacy of his Chriſtian ſubjects; but Lanctantius aſſerts, that he was compelled to it, together with his partner, by Galerius, who coming to Nicomedia, upon the emperor's recovery from a great ſickneſs, threatened him with a civil war, in caſe he refuſed to reſign. However, of this we are well aſſured, that he ſtill preſerved a dignity of ſentiment in his retirement, that might induce us to believe he had no other motive but virtue for his reſignation. Having retired to his birth-place, he ſpent his time in cultivating his garden, aſſuring his viſitors that then only he began to enjoy the world, when he was thought by the reſt of mankind to have forſaken it. Some of his friends attempting to perſuade him

him to reſume the empire, he replied, That if they knew his preſent happineſs, they would rather endeavour to imitate than diſturb it. In this contented manner he lived ſome time, and at laſt died either by poiſon or madneſs; but this is uncertain. His reign, which continued twenty years, was active and uſeful; but his authority, which was tinctured with ſeverity, was well adapted to the depraved ſtate of morals at that time.

Maximian, his partner in the empire, and in reſignation, was by no means ſo well contented with his ſituation. He longed once more for power, and diſturbed the two ſucceeding reigns with vain efforts to reſume it; attempting to engage Diocleſian in the ſame deſign. Being obliged to leave Rome, where he had occaſioned great confuſion, he went over into Gaul, where he was kindly received by Conſtantine, then acknowledged emperor of the Weſt. But there alſo continuing his intrigues, and endeavouring to force his own daughter to deſtroy her huſband, he was detected, and condemned to die by whatever death he ſhould think proper. Lactantius tells us that he choſe to die by hanging.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLI.

CONSTANTIUS and GALERIUS, making together the Fortieth EMPEROR of ROME.

U. C. 1057. A.D. 304. UPON the reſignation of the two emperors, the Cæſars whom they had formerly choſen, were univerſally acknowledged as their ſucceſſors. Conſtantius Chlorus, who was ſo called from the paleneſs of his complexion, was virtuous, valiant, and merciful. Galerius, on the other hand, was brave but brutal, incontinent, and cruel. As there was ſuch a diſparity in their tempers, they readily agreed, upon coming into full power, to divide the empire; Conſtantius being appointed to govern the weſtern parts, namely, Italy, Sicily, the greateſt part of Africa, together with Spain, Gaul, Britain, and Germany; while Galerius had the eaſtern parts allotted to his ſhare; to wit, Illyricum, Pannonia, Thrace, Macedonia, all the provinces of Greece, and the Leſſer Aſia, together with Egypt, Syria, Judæa, and all the countries eaſtward. The greatneſs of the taſk however ſoon induced the emperors to take in two partners more, Severus and Maximin, who were made Cæſars, and aſſiſted in conducting

conducting affairs; ſo that the empire was now under the guidance of four perſons, all inveſted with ſupreme authority.

We are informed of but few particulars of the reign of Conſtantius, except a detail of his character, which appears, in every light, moſt amiable. He was frugal, chaſte, and temperate. Being one day reproached by Diocleſian's ambaſſadors for his poverty, he only intimated his wants to the people, and in a few hours the ſums preſented him amazed the beholders, and exceeded their higheſt expectations. "Learn "from hence (ſaid he then to the ambaſſadors) "that the love of the people is the richeſt trea- "ſure; and that a prince's wealth is never ſo "ſafe as when his people are the guardians of "his exchequer." His mercy and juſtice were equally conſpicuous in his treatment of the Chriſtians, whom he would not ſuffer to be injured; and when, at length, he was perſuaded to diſplace all the Chriſtian officers of his houſehold, that would not change their religion, he ſent the few that complied away in diſgrace; alledging, That thoſe who were not true to their God, would never be faithful to their prince.

In the ſecond year of his reign, he went over into Britain, and leaving his ſon Conſtantine as a kind of hoſtage in the court of his partner in the empire, he took up his reſidence at York. He there continued in the practice of his uſual virtues,

virtues, till falling ſick, he began to think of appointing his ſon for his ſucceſſor. He accordingly ſent for him with all ſpeed; but he was paſt recovery before his ſon's arrival; notwithſtanding, he received him with marks of the utmoſt affection, and, raiſing himſelf in his bed, gave him ſeveral uſeful inſtructions, particularly recommending the Chriſtians to his protection. He then bequeathed the empire to his care, and crying out, That none but the pious Conſtantine ſhould ſucceed him, he expired in his arms.

In the mean time, Galerius, his partner in the empire, being informed of Conſtantine's advancement, teſtified the moſt ungovernable rage, and was even going to condemn the meſſenger who brought him the account; but being diſſuaded, he ſeemed to acquieſce in what he could not prevent, and ſent him the marks of royalty; but, at the ſame time, declared Severus emperor in oppoſition to his intereſts.

Juſt about this time another pretender to the empire ſtarted up. This was Maxentius, a perſon of mean extraction, but very much favoured by the ſoldiers, whom he permitted to pillage at diſcretion. Thus there were ſeveral oppoſite intereſts at the ſame time, and all conſpiring each other's downfall.

In

In order to oppoſe Maxentius, Severus led a numerous army towards the gates of Rome; but his ſoldiers conſidering againſt whom they were to fight, immediately abandoned him; and ſhortly after he put an end to his own life, by opening his veins.

To revenge his death, Galerius marched into Italy, reſolving to ruin the inhabitants, and to deſtroy the whole ſenate. His ſoldiers, however, upon their approach to the capital, began to waver in their reſolutions; wherefore, he was obliged to have recourſe to entreaties, imploring them not to abandon him: and retiring by the ſame route by which he had advanced, he made Licinius, who was originally the ſon of a poor labourer in Dacia, Cæſar, in the room of Severus who was ſlain. This ſeemed to be the laſt act of his power, for ſhortly after he was ſeiſed with a very extraordinary diſorder in his privities, which baffled all the ſkill of his phyſicians, and carried him off, after he had languiſhed in torments for near the ſpace of a year.

His cruelty to the Chriſtians was one of the many crimes alledged againſt him; and their hiſtorians have not failed to aggravate the circumſtances of his death as a judgment from Heaven for his former impiety. However this be, he abated much of his ſeverities againſt them

them on his death bed, and revoked thoſe edicts which he had formerly publiſhed, tending to their perſecution, a little before his death.

CHAP. XLII.

CONSTANTINE the GREAT, the Forty-firſt EMPEROR of ROME.

U. C. 1064. A.D. 311. CONSTANTINE, being thus delivered from his great opponent, might now be conſidered as poſſeſſing more power than any of his rivals in authority, who were yet remaining. The empire was at that time divided between him and three others: Maxentius, who governed in Rome; a perſon of a cruel diſpoſition, and a ſtedfaſt ſupporter of paganiſm: Licinius, who was adopted by Galerius, and commanded in the Eaſt; and likewiſe Maximin, who had formerly been declared Cæſar with Severus, and who alſo governed ſome of the eaſtern provinces.

Whether the empire was by this time ſick of its inteſtine diviſions, or whether each of its commanders was content with his ſhare, is not material to enquire; but, for a time, all things ſeemed to wear a peaceful appearance; till, at length, either ambition, or the tyrannical conduct

duct of Maxentius, induced Conſtantine to engage in an expedition to expel that commander from Rome; and to make the proper preparations for marching into Italy. It was upon this occaſion that he formed a reſolution which produced a great change in the politicks, as well as the morals, of mankind; and gave a new turn to the councils of the wiſe, and the purſuits of ambition. One evening, as we are told by Euſebius, the army being upon its march towards Rome, Conſtantine was taken up with various conſiderations upon the fate of ſublunary things, and the dangers of his approaching expedition: ſenſible of his own incapacity to ſucceed without divine aſſiſtance, he employed his meditations upon the opinions that were then chiefly agitated among mankind, and ſent up his ejaculations to Heaven to inſpire him with wiſdom to chooſe the path to purſue. It was then, as the ſun was declining, that there ſuddenly appeared a pillar of light in the heavens, in the figure of a croſs, with this inſcription, ΤΟΥΤΩ ΝΙΚΑ *In this overcome.* So extraordinary an appearance did not fail to create aſtoniſhment both in the emperor and his whole army, who conſidered it as their various diſpoſitions led them to believe. Thoſe who were attached to paganiſm, prompted by their aruſpices, pronounced it to be a moſt inauſpicious omen, portending the moſt unfortunate events.

But it made a different impreſſion on the emperor's mind; who, as the account goes, was further encouraged by viſions the ſame night. He, therefore, the day following, cauſed a royal ſtandard to be made, like that which he had ſeen in the heavens, and commanded it to be carried before him in his wars, as an enſign of victory and celeſtial protection. After this, he conſulted with ſeveral of the principal teachers of Chriſtianity, and made a public avowal of that religion.

Conſtantine having thus attached his ſoldiers to his intereſt, who were moſtly of the Chriſtian perſuaſion, loſt no time in entering Italy, with ninety thouſand foot, and eight thouſand horſe; and ſoon advanced almoſt to the gates of Rome. The unfortunate Maxentius, who had long abandoned himſelf to eaſe and debauchery, now began to make preparations, when it was too late. He firſt put in practice all the ſuperſtitious rites which paganiſm taught were neceſſary; he next conſulted the Sibylline books, from whence he was informed, that on that great day, the enemy of Rome ſhould periſh. This prediction, which was equivocal, he applied to Conſtantine; wherefore, leaving all things in the beſt poſture, he advanced from the city, with an army of an hundred and ſeventy thouſand foot, and eighteen thouſand horſe. The engagement was, for ſome time, fierce

fierce and bloody, till his cavalry being routed, victory declared upon the ſide of his opponent, and he was drowned in his flight, by the breaking down of a bridge, as he attempted to croſs the river Tyber.

Conſtantine, in conſequence of this victory, entering the city, diſclaimed all praiſes which the ſenate and people were ready to offer; aſcribing his ſucceſs to a ſuperior power. He even cauſed the croſs, which he was ſaid to have ſeen in the heavens, to be placed at the right of all his ſtatues with an inſcription, implying, "That under the influence of that victorious "croſs, Conſtantine had delivered the city from "the yoke of tyrannical power, and had reſtored "the ſenate and people of Rome to their an-"cient authority." He afterwards ordained that no criminal ſhould, for the future, ſuffer death by the croſs, which had formerly been the uſual way of puniſhing ſlaves convicted of capital offences. Edicts were ſoon after iſſued, declaring that the Chriſtians ſhould be eaſed of all their grievances, and received into places of truſt and authority. Thus the new religion was ſeen at once to prevail over the whole Roman empire; and as that enormous fabrick had been built and conducted upon pagan principles, it loſt a great deal of its ſtrength and coherence, when thoſe principles, were thus at once ſubverted.

Things continued in this ſtate for ſome time, Conſtantine, all the while, contributing what was in his power to the intereſt of religion, and the revival of learning, which had long been upon the decline, and was almoſt wholly extinct in the empire. But in the midſt of theſe aſſiduities, the peace of the empire was again diſturbed by the preparations of Maximin, who governed in the Eaſt; and who, deſirous of a full participation of power, marched againſt Licomius, with a very numerous army. In conſequence of this ſtep, after many conflicts, a general engagement enſued, in which Maximin ſuffered a total defeat; many of his troops were cut to pieces, and thoſe who ſurvived ſubmitted to the conqueror. Maximin, however, having eſcaped the general carnage, once more put himſelf at the head of another army, reſolving to try the fortune of the field; but his death prevented the deſign. As he died by a very extraordinary kind of madneſs, the Chriſtians, of whom he was the declared enemy, did not fail to aſcribe his end to a judgement from Heaven; but this was the age in which falſe judgements and falſe miracles made up the bulk of uninſtructive hiſtory.

Conſtantine and Licinius thus remaining undiſputed poſſeſſors and partners in the empire, all things promiſed a peaceable continuance of friendſhip and power. However, it was

was ſoon found, that the ſame ambition which aimed after a part, would be content with nothing leſs than the whole. Pagan writers aſcribe the rupture, between theſe two potentates, to Conſtantine; while the Chriſtians, on the other hand, impute it wholly to Licinius. Both, perhaps, might have concurred; for Licinius is convicted of having perſecuted Chriſtianity, which was ſo highly favoured by his rival; and Conſtantine is known to have been the firſt to begin the preparations for an open rupture. Both ſides exerted all their power to make oppoſition; and, at the head of very formidable armies, came to an engagement near Cybalis, in Pannonia. Conſtantine, previous to the battle, in the midſt of his Chriſtian biſhops, begged the aſſiſtance of Heaven; while Licinius, with equal zeal, called upon the pagan prieſts to intercede with the gods in his favour. The ſucceſs was on the ſide of truth: Conſtantine, after an obſtinate reſiſtance, became victorious; took the enemy's camp; and, after ſome time, compelled Licinius to ſue for a truce, which was agreed upon. But this was of no long continuance; for ſoon after, the war breaking out afreſh, and the rivals coming once more to a general engagement, it proved deciſive. Licinius was entirely defeated, and purſued by Conſtantine into Nicomedia, where he ſurrendered himſelf

to the victor; having firſt obtained an oath that his life ſhould be ſpared; and that he ſhould be permitted to paſs the remainder of his days in retirement. This oath, however, Conſtantine ſhortly after broke; for either fearing his deſigns, or finding him actually engaged in freſh conſpiracies, he commanded him to be put to death, together with Martian his general, who, ſome time before, had been created Cæſar.

Conſtantine being now ſole monarch of the empire, without a rival to divide his power, or any perſon from whoſe claims he could have the leaſt apprehenſions, reſolved to eſtabliſh Chriſtianity on ſo ſure a baſis, that no new revolutions ſhould ſhake it. He commanded that in all the provinces of the empire the orders of the biſhops ſhould be exactly obeyed; a privilege of which, in ſucceeding times, theſe fathers made but a very indifferent uſe. He called alſo a general council of them, in order to repreſs the hereſies that had already crept into the church, particularly that of Arius. To this place repaired about three hundred and eighteen biſhops, beſides a multitude of preſbyters and deacons, together with the emperor himſelf; who all, except about ſeventeen, concurred in condemning the tenets of Arius; and this hereſiarch, with his aſſociates, was baniſhed into a remote part of the empire.

Having

Having thus reſtored univerſal tranquillity to the empire, he was not able to avoid calamities of a more domeſtick nature. As the wretched hiſtories of this period are entirely at variance with each other, it is not eaſy to ſay what were the motives which induced him to put his wife Fauſta and his ſon Criſpus to death. The moſt plauſible account is this: Fauſta, the empreſs, who was a woman of great beauty, but of extravagant deſires, had long, though ſecretly, loved Criſpus, Conſtantine's ſon by a former wife. She had tried every art to inſpire this youth with a mutual paſſion; and finding her more diſtant efforts ineffectual, had even the confidence to make him an open confeſſion of her deſires. This produced an explanation, which was fatal to both. Criſpus received her addreſſes with deteſtation; and ſhe, to be revenged, accuſed him to the emperor. Conſtantine, fired at once with jealouſy and rage, ordered him to die without an hearing; nor did his innocence appear till it was too late for redreſs. The only reparation, therefore, that remained, was the putting Fauſta, the wicked inſtrument of his former cruelty, to death; which was accordingly executed upon her, together with ſome others, who had been accomplices in her falſehood and treachery.

But the private misfortunes of a few were not to be weighed againſt evils of a more gene-

ral nature, which the Roman empire ſhortly after experienced. Theſe aroſe from a meaſure which this emperor conceived and executed, of transferring the ſeat of the empire from Rome to Byzantium, or Conſtantinople, as it was afterwards called. Whatever might have been the reaſons which induced him to this undertaking; whether it was becauſe he was offended at ſome affronts he had received at Rome, or that he ſuppoſed Conſtantinople more in the centre of the empire; or that he thought the eaſtern parts more required his preſence, experience has ſhown that they were all weak and groundleſs. The empire had long before been in a moſt declining ſtate; but this, in a great meaſure, gave precipitation to its downfall. After this it never reſumed its former ſplendour, but, like a flower tranſplanted into a foreign clime, languiſhed by degrees, and at length ſunk into nothing.

His firſt deſign was to build a city, which he might make the capital of the world; and for this purpoſe, he made choice of a ſituation at Chalcedon in Aſia Minor; but we are told, that in laying out the ground-plan, an eagle caught up the line, and flew with it over to Byzantium, a city which lay upon the oppoſite ſide of the Boſphorus. Here, therefore, it was thought expedient to fix the ſeat of empire; and, indeed, nature ſeemed to have formed it with all

all the conveniences, and all the beauties, which might induce power to make it the ſeat of reſidence. It was ſituated on a plain, that roſe gently from the water: it commanded that ſtrait which unites the Mediterranean with the Euxine ſea, and was furniſhed with all the advantages which the moſt indulgent climate could beſtow. This city, therefore, U. C. 1084. A.D. 330. he beautified with the moſt magnificent edifices; he divided it into fourteen regions; built a capitol, an amphitheatre, many churches, and other public works; and having thus rendered it equal to the magnificence of his idea, he dedicated it in a very ſolemn manner, to the God of martyrs; and, in about two years after, repaired thither with his whole court.

This removal produced no immediate alteration in the government of the empire; the inhabitants of Rome, though with reluctance, ſubmitted to the change; nor was there for two or three years any diſturbance in the ſtate, until, at length, the Goths finding that the Romans had withdrawn all their garriſons along the Danube, renewed their inroads, and ravaged the country with unheard-of cruelty. Conſtantine, however, ſoon repreſſed their incurſions, and ſo ſtraitened them, that near an hundred thouſand of their number periſhed by

by cold and hunger. Theſe, and ſome other inſurrections, being happily ſuppreſſed, the government of the empire was divided as follows: Conſtantine, the emperor's eldeſt ſon, commanded in Gaul and the weſtern provinces; Conſtantius, his ſecond, governed Africk and Illyricum; and Conſtans, the youngeſt, ruled in Italy. Damatius, the emperor's brother, was ſent to defend thoſe parts that bordered upon the Goths; and Annibalianus, his nephew, had the charge of Cappadocia and Armenia Minor. This diviſion of the empire ſtill further contributed to its downfall; for the united ſtrength of the ſtate being no longer brought to repreſs invaſions, the barbarians fought with ſuperior numbers, and conquered at laſt, though often defeated. Conſtantine, however, did not live to feel theſe calamities. The latter part of his reign was peaceful and ſplendid; ambaſſadors from the remoteſt Indies came to acknowledge his authority; the Perſians, who were ready for freſh inroads, upon finding him prepared to oppoſe them, ſent humbly to deſire his friendſhip and forgiveneſs. He was above ſixty years old, and had reigned above thirty, when he found his health begin to decline. To obviate the effects of his diſorder, which was an intermitting fever, he made uſe of the warm baths

of

of the city; but receiving no benefit from them, he removed, for change of air, to Helenopolis, a city which he had built to the memory of his mother. His diſorder increaſing, he changed again to Nicomedia; where finding himſelf without hopes of recovery, he cauſed himſelf to be baptized; and, having ſoon after received the ſacrament, he expired after a memorable and active reign of almoſt thirty-two years. This monarch's character is repreſented to us in very different lights; the Chriſtian writers of that time adorning it with every ſtrain of panegyrick; the heathens, on the contrary, loaded it with all the virulence of invective. In fact, it ſeems to be compoſed of a mixture of virtues and vices, of piety and credulity, of courage and cruelty, of juſtice and ambition. He eſtabliſhed a religion that continues to be the bleſſing of mankind, but purſued a ſcheme of politicks that deſtroyed the empire.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXIII.

Of the Deſtruction of the ROMAN EMPIRE, after the Death of CONSTANTINE, and the Events which haſtened its Cataſtrophe.

HITHERTO the characters of the Roman emperors have been intimately connected with the hiſtory of the ſtate: and its riſe or decline might have been ſaid to depend on the virtues and vices, the wiſdom or the indolence, of thoſe who governed it. But from this dreary period its recovery was become deſperate; no wiſdom could obviate its decadence, no courage oppoſe the evils that ſurrounded it on every ſide. Inſtead, therefore, of entering into a minute account of the characters of its ſucceeding emperors, it will at preſent ſuffice to take a general ſurvey of this part of the hiſtory, and rather deſcribe the cauſes by which the ſtate was brought down to nothing, than the perſons who neither could haſten nor prevent its decline. Indeed, if we were to enter into a detail concerning the characters of the princes of thoſe times, it ſhould be thoſe of the conquerors, not the conquered; of thoſe Gothick chiefs who led

led a more virtuous and more courageous people to the conqueſts of nations, corrupted by vice and enervated by luxury.

Theſe barbarians were at firſt unknown to the Romans, and for ſome time after had been only incommodious to them. But they were now become formidable, and aroſe in ſuch numbers, that the earth ſeemed to produce a new race of mankind, to complete the empire's deſtruction. They had been increaſing in their deſerts, amidſt regions covered with ſnows, and had long only waited the opportunity of poſſeſſing a more favourable climate. Againſt ſuch an enemy, no courage could avail, no abilities be ſucceſsful—a victory only cut off numbers without an habitation; and a name ſoon to be ſucceeded by others equally deſperate and obſcure.

The emperors who were deſtined to contend with this people, were ſeldom furniſhed with a ſufficient degree of courage or conduct to oppoſe them. Aſia ſeemed to enervate their manners, and produced a deſire to be adored like the monarchs of the Eaſt. Sunk in ſoftneſs, they ſhowed themſelves with leſs frequency to the ſoldiers; they became more indolent, fonder of domeſtick pleaſures, and more abſtracted from the empire. Conſtantius, who reigned thirty-eight years, was weak, timid, and unſucceſsful; governed by his eunuchs and his wives; and

unfit to prop the falling empire. Julian, his ſucceſſor, ſurnamed the Apoſtate, upon account of his relapſing into paganiſm, was, notwithſtanding, a very good and a very valiant prince. He, by his wiſdom, conduct, and œconomy, chaſed the barbarians, who had taken fifty towns upon the Rhine, out of their new ſettlements; and his name was a terror to them during his reign, which laſted but two years. Jovian and Valentinian had virtue and ſtrength ſufficient to preſerve the empire from immediately falling under its enemies. No prince ſaw the neceſſity of reſtoring the ancient plan of the empire more than Valentinian; the former emperors had drained all the frontier garriſons, merely to ſtrengthen their own power at home; but his whole life was employed in fortifying the banks of the Rhine; making levies, raiſing caſtles, placing troops in proper ſtations, and furniſhing them with ſubſiſtence for their ſupport; but an event, that no human prudence could foreſee, brought a new enemy to aſſiſt in the univerſal deſtruction.

That tract of land which lies between the Palus Mæotis, the mountains of Caucaſus, and the Caſpian ſea, was inhabited by a numerous ſavage people, who went by the name of the Huns and Allanes. Their ſoil was fertile, and the inhabitants fond of robbery and plunder. As

As they imagined it impracticable to croſs the Palus Mæotis, they were altogether unacquainted with the Romans; ſo that they remained confined within the limits their ignorance had aſſigned them, while other nations plundered with ſecurity. It has been the opinion of ſome, that the ſlime, which was rolled down by the current of the Tanais, had by degrees formed a kind of incruſtation on the ſurface of the Cimmærian Boſphorus, over which thoſe people are ſuppoſed to have paſſed. Others relate that two young Scythians, being in full purſuit of an heifer, the terrified creature ſwam over an arm of the ſea; and the youths immediately following her, found themſelves, as in a new world, upon the oppoſite ſhore. Upon their return, they did not fail to relate the wonders of the ſtrange lands and countries which they had diſcovered. Upon their information, an innumerable body of Huns paſſed thoſe ſtraits, and meeting firſt with the Goths, made that people fly before them. The Goths, in conſternation, preſented themſelves on the banks of the Danube, and, with a ſuppliant air, entreated the Romans to allow them a place of of refuge. This they eaſily obtained from Valens, who aſſigned ſeveral portions of land in Thrace for their ſupport, but left them deſtitute of all needful ſupplies. Stimulated, therefore, by hunger and reſentment, they ſoon after roſe againſt

againſt their protectors, and in a dreadful engagement, which was fought near Adrianople, they deſtroyed Valens and the greateſt part of his army.

It was in this manner the Roman armies grew weaker; ſo that the emperors, finding it difficult, at laſt, to raiſe levies in the provinces, were obliged to hire one body of barbarians to oppoſe another. This expedient had its uſe in circumſtances of immediate danger: but when that was over, the Romans found it was as difficult to rid themſelves of their new allies, as of their former enemies. Thus the empire was not ruined by any particular invaſion, but ſunk gradually under the weight of different attacks made upon it on every ſide. When the barbarians had waſted one province, thoſe who ſucceeded the firſt ſpoilers, proceeded to another. Their devaſtations were at firſt limited to Thrace, Mœſia, and Pannonia; but when theſe countries were ruined, they deſtroyed Macedonia, Theſſaly, and Greece; and from thence they proceeded to Noricum. The empire was in this manner continually ſhrinking, and Italy, at laſt, became the frontier of its own dominion.

The valour and conduct of Theodoſius, in ſome meaſure retarded the deſtruction which had begun in the time of Valens, but upon his death the enemy became irreſiſtible. A large

large body of Goths had been called in to aſſiſt the regular forces of the empire, under the command of Alaric, their king; but what was brought in to ſtop the univerſal decline proved the moſt mortal ſtab to its ſecurity. This Gothic prince, who is repreſented as brave, impetuous, and enterpriſing, perceiving the weakneſs of the ſtate, and how little Arcadius and Honorius, the ſucceſſors of Theodoſius, were able to ſecure it; being inſtigated alſo ſtill further, by the artifices of one Rufinus, who had deſigns upon the throne himſelf; this warlike prince, I ſay, putting himſelf at the head of his barbarous forces, declared war againſt his employers, and fought the armies of the empire for ſome years with various ſucceſs. However, in proportion as his troops were cut off, he received new ſupplies from his native foreſts; and, at length putting his mighty deſigns in execution, paſſed the Alps, and poured down, like a torrent, among the fruitful vallies of Italy. This charming region had long been the ſeat of indolence and ſenſual delight; its fields were now turned into gardens of pleaſure, that only ſerved to enervate the poſſeſſors, from having once been a nurſery of military ſtrength, that furniſhed ſoldiers for the conqueſt of mankind. The timid inhabitants, therefore, beheld with terrour, a dreadful enemy ravaging in the midſt of their country,

while their wretched emperor, Honorius, who was then in Ravenna, ſtill only ſeemed reſolved to keep up his dignity, and to refuſe any accommodation. But the inhabitants of Rome felt the calamities of the times with double aggravation. This great city, which had long ſate as miſtreſs of the world, now ſaw herſelf beſieged by an army of fierce and terrible barbarians; and being crowded with inhabitants, it was reduced, by the extremities of peſtilence and famine, to a moſt deplorable ſituation. In this extremity the ſenate diſpatched their ambaſſadours to Alaric, deſiring him either to grant them peace upon reaſonable terms, or to give them leave to fight it out with him in the open field. To this meſſage, however, the Gothic monarch only replied, with a burſt of laughter, "that thick graſs was eaſier cut than "thin:" implying, That their troops when cooped up within the narrow compaſs of the city, would be more eaſily overcome, than when drawn out in order of battle. When they came to debate about peace, he demanded all their riches, and all their ſlaves. When he was aſked, "What then he would leave them?" he ſternly replied, "their lives." Theſe were hard conditions for ſuch a celebrated city to accept; but compelled by the neceſſity of the times, they raiſed an immenſe treaſure, both by taxation and by ſtripping the heathen temples; and thus, at

length, bought off their fierce invader. But this was but a temporary removal of the calamity; for Alaric now finding that he might become maſter of Rome whenever he thought proper, returned with his army, a ſhort time after; preſſed it more cloſely than he had done before, and at laſt took it; but whether by force or ſtratagem is not agreed among hiſtorians. Thus that city, which for ages had plundered the reſt of the world, and enriched herſelf with the ſpoils of mankind, now felt, in turn, the ſad reverſe of fortune, and ſuffered all that barbarity could inflict, or patience endure. The ſoldiers had free liberty to pillage all places except the Chriſtian churches; and, in the midſt of this horrible deſolation, ſo great was the reverence of theſe barbarians for their holy religion, that the pagan Romans found ſafety in applying to thoſe of the Chriſtian perſuaſion for protection. This dreadful devaſtation continued for three days, and unſpeakable were the precious monuments, both of art and learning, that ſunk under the fury of the conquerors. However, there were ſtill left numberleſs traces of the city's former greatneſs; ſo that this capture ſeemed rather a correction, than a total overthrow. U. C. 1163. A.D. 410.

But the Gothic conquerors of the Weſt, though they had ſuffered Rome to ſurvive its firſt capture, now found how eaſy it was to become

maſters of it upon any other occaſion. The extent of its walls had, in fact, made it almoſt impracticable for the inhabitants to defend them; and, as it was ſituated in a plain, it might be ſtormed without much difficulty. Beſides this, no ſuccours were to be expected from without; for the number of the people was ſo extremely deminiſhed, that the emperors were obliged to retire to Ravenna; a place ſo fortified by nature, that they could be ſafe without the aſſiſtance of an army. What Alaric, therefore, ſpared, Geſneric, king of the Vandals, not long after contributed to deſtroy: his mercileſs ſoldiers, for fourteen days together, ravaged with implacable fury, in the midſt of that venerable place. Neither private dwellings, nor public buildings; neither ſex, nor age, nor religion, were the leaſt protection againſt their luſt or avarice.

The capital of the empire being thus ranſacked ſeveral times, and Italy over-run by barbarous invaders, under various denominations, from the remoteſt ſkirts of Europe; the weſtern emperors, for ſome time, continued to hold the title, without the power, of royalty. Honorius lived till he ſaw himſelf ſtripped of the greateſt part of his dominions; his capital taken by the Goths; the Huns poſſeſſed of Pannonia; the Alans, Suevi, and Vandals eſtabliſhed in Spain; and the Burgundians ſettled

in Gaul, where the Goths alſo fixed themſelves at laſt. After ſome time, the inhabitants of Rome alſo, being abandoned by their princes, feebly attempted to take the ſupreme power into their own hands. Armorica and Britain, ſeeing themſelves forſaken, began to regulate themſelves by their own laws. Thus the power of the ſtate was entirely broken, and thoſe who aſſumed the title of emperors only encountered certain deſtruction. At length, even the very name of emperor of the Weſt expired upon the abdication of Auguſtulus; and Odoacer, general of the Heruli, aſſumed the title of king of all Italy. Such was the end of this great empire, that had conquered mankind with its arms, and inſtructed the world with its wiſdom; that had riſen by temperance, and that fell by luxury; that had been eſtabliſhed by a ſpirit of patriotiſm, and that ſunk into ruin when the empire was become ſo extenſive, that a Roman citizen was but an empty name. Its final diſſolution happened about five hundred and twenty-two years after the battle of Pharſalia; an hundred and forty-ſix after the removal of the imperial ſeat to Conſtantinople; and four hundred and ſeventy ſix after the nativity of our Saviour.

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FINIS.


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